

Side event “The UPR: An implementation reality check”, Tuesday 9th May 2017

Thank you for giving me the floor.

I will be speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up, a group recently established to offer a broad informal platform for States from all regions, as well as OHCHR, UN agencies, NHRIs, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders, to share national good practice on national implementation coordination, impact, reporting and follow-up, and to discuss common challenges and lessons learnt.

We are thus driven by a common desire and objective: to promote effective domestic implementation and impact on the ground, through international cooperation and dialogue.

As we begin the third cycle of the UPR, we welcome the opportunity provided for by this event to undertake a ‘reality check’ of progress made over the past 10 years. UPR has clearly proved its important value-added to the human rights system, but we agree that, in the end, its success will be measured by the effective on the ground implementation of recommendations. Indeed, that is also the case for the wider UN human rights pillar: it is important, in order to build credibility and demonstrate utility, that we focus our attention on the implementation of all UN human rights recommendations – from UPR, Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies, and that we do so in a holistic manner, also taking account of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We refer to this opportunity as the new ‘human rights implementation agenda.’

The Group of Friends is particularly focused on what the OHCHR has termed “national mechanisms for reporting and follow-up” (NMRF’s), and their potential for boosting and ensuring an effective domestic implementation agenda. An increasingly large number of States are putting in place different mechanisms, on a voluntary basis, and are also working together to share experience and cooperate. Technical and capacity-support is also emerging as an important element in this dialogue. We have seen over the past years that the Council’s debates on technical cooperation under item 10 have become quite less attractive, while this agenda item could – and should – serve as an excellent forum for an open and genuine dialogue between states about their needs for technical assistance.

Building upon this, we would have two questions for the panelists:

First: how do you see the potential of these emerging NMRF’s in aggregating the actions and views of different actors on the ground (NHRIs and NGOs but also OHCHR field presences, UN country teams, etc.), and which “checks and balances” could be established within those structures to allow for a State driven implementation with the necessary proper monitoring of effective implementation?

Second: how could item 10 of the Council’s agenda become more relevant to support States in their efforts to create efficient mechanisms responsible for implementation, measurement, reporting and follow-up.?

Thank you.