**Council of Europe contribution to the questionnaire on enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights**

We refer to the questionnaire sent as part of the consultations undertaken by the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee with States with a view to preparing a more focused and in-depth study on the ways and means to enhance international cooperation in the field of human rights, pursuant to Council resolution 23/3.

We would like to thank the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee for having transmitted the questionnaire to the Council of Europe for possible reply. We note that the questions are specifically conceived to be replied by member States, and for this reason we would not be able to reply to all the questions.

We would nevertheless take this opportunity to provide the Human Rights Advisory Committee with some relevant views on the role regional organisations, and in particular the Council of Europe, can have in strengthening international cooperation in the field of human rights and on our specific experience of cooperation with the United Nations.

We believe that more interaction is needed, and indeed possible, between the regional and universal human rights mechanisms in terms of information sharing and coordination, with special regard to monitoring bodies. This is obviously particularly important in the areas in which the Council of Europe has set up specific monitoring bodies, where the reciprocal findings can be of mutual interest and reinforce each other’s action.

The Council of Europe Secretariat and the Office of the High Commissioner have recently agreed upon a joint declaration on the reinforcement of co-operation, which calls *inter alia* to take appropriate measures to ensure that the respective legal instruments, recommendations and findings of treaty and monitoring bodies are taken into account in each other work, that cooperation is carried out in joint advocacy action regarding issues of mutual concern, in the developments of technical assistance activities in the field and also in assisting governments in the implementation of recommendations by the Council of Europe. The conclusion of this kind of agreements may be a suggestion to improve international cooperation in this area, at least as far as relations with regional organisations are concerned.

The Council of Europe also regularly submits information to the UPR secretariat about concerned member states, and recommendations often also refer to Council of Europe instruments and monitoring bodies. In this respect, and as indicated above, ways to further strengthen co-operation between the OHCHR and the Council of Europe in assisting the States concerned in the implementation of relevant recommendations are examined.