Mr. Chairperson-Rapporteur,

My statement relates to Article 2 of the Optional Protocol. We very much welcome the idea of creating National Implementation Mechanisms. We think it would be beneficial to recognize the crucial role of independent National Human Rights Institutions in this regard more explicitly.

National Human Rights Institutions that comply with the principles relating to the status of national institutions, commonly known as the Paris Principles, are already promoting and monitoring the effective implementation of international human rights standards, a role which is increasingly recognized by the international community.

NHRIs that comply with the Paris principles are present in 112 UN member states. Where NHRIs exist, States should consider designating them as the National Implementation Mechanism. The Optional Protocol should not encourage States to create unnecessary duplications.

Instead the treaty should make better use of the potential of National Human Rights Institutions. They are mandated by domestic legislation to promote the implementation of international human rights treaties in national law and practice and with the monitoring of national human rights situations. In addition, most NHRIs are vested with powers to accept, investigate and resolve or forward individual complains of human rights violations. The role of NHRIs should thus be anchored and further developed in the text of the treaty and the optional protocol.