This statement is submitted by Mor Çatı Women’s Shelter Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, to the OHCHR, in response to the invitation to submit to the questionnaire regarding the General Assembly resolutions 68/268 “Strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system” and "Human right treaty body system.”

**About Mor Çatı Women’s Shelter Foundation**

[Mor Çatı Women’s Shelter Foundation](https://en.morcati.org.tr/) was established in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1990 to combat violence against women. The experiences of women who applied to Mor Çatı demonstrate their needs and the barriers they face as they try to distance themselves from violence. To combat violence against women and ensure gender equality, Mor Çatı, based on the information obtained from women, monitors and reports on the implementation of laws, regulations and international conventions, including Istanbul Convention and CEDAW, providing policy recommendations to decision-makers such as the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Services, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior.

**The General Assembly Resolutions 68/268**

As Mor Çatı Women’s Shelter Foundation, we have submitted and participated in monitoring mechanisms by the Treaty Bodies extensively, including the CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. We have submitted shadow reports and participated in the Pre-sessional meetings for the adoption of the List of Issues and the General Sessions for the periodic reviews.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Drawing upon our extensive experience, we wish to address the challenges encountered by civil society participants in Treaty Bodies and offer recommendations aimed at enhancing the efficiency of the human rights treaty body system.

A significant impediment faced by civil society organizations pertains to inadequate capacity and resources, encompassing financial, social, political, and educational dimensions. These constraints hinder their meaningful engagement in Treaty Body monitoring activities. However, given their role as organizations providing direct support on different issues—such as Mor Çatı's provision of direct support to women and children affected by male violence—these organizations possess invaluable firsthand information crucial to the monitoring process. Recognizing the indispensable nature of equal civil society participation and access, we assert that the Committees' Concluding Declarations would be inherently deficient without comprehensive input from these stakeholders. We advocate for measures aimed at fostering greater civil society involvement in Treaty Bodies, necessitating the provision of requisite time, space, and resources. Concurrently, it is imperative for Treaty Bodies to ensure the protection of human rights defenders actively participating in these processes.

We observe a concerning trend exemplified by states like Turkey, wherein submitted state reports increasingly exhibit substandard quality, redundancy, and a lack of new data or insights, seemingly fulfilling formal obligations without substantive engagement. As civil society representatives, we ask Treaty Bodies to address and rectify this issue. We recommend the establishment of pragmatic, regularly updated guidelines to incentivize and compel States to submit comprehensive reports.

Likewise, inadequate enforcement of Concluding Observations by State Parties—such as those observed in Turkey—necessitates a proactive approach to reinforce civil society efforts in advocating for their implementation. Emphasizing unaddressed Observations/actions from previous Concluding Observations is crucial in this regard.

Furthermore, the issue of states failing to fulfill their obligations to participate in monitoring processes and submit timely reports persists. For instance, Turkey submitted a report to the Committee monitoring the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) eight years ago in 2016, with no subsequent monitoring undertaken. Against the backdrop of the current economic crisis in Turkey and the violations of economic, social, and cultural rights affecting various groups, initiating the next monitoring process is imperative.

1. The reports can be found here: https://en.morcati.org.tr/reports/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)