



Consultation Process by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Treaty Body Strengthening -

Submission by Liechtenstein

General remarks

1. Liechtenstein supports the on-going process of reflection on ways to strengthen the treaty body system which was called for by Ms. Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in 2009 and welcomes her invitation to Member States to submit written proposals to enhance efficiency, accessibility and impact of the treaty body system.
2. Liechtenstein has been a longstanding supporter of a strong and independent treaty body system and continues to believe that the Treaty Body system is one of the most important achievements of the UN human rights system. Member States must have a keen interest in ensuring the proper working and functioning of this system in the light of an ever increasing number of treaty ratifications and States Parties' reports.
3. Strengthening the Treaty Body system is a shared responsibility of Treaty Bodies themselves, States Parties of UN human rights treaties, the UN system and other stakeholders, in particular civil society, in accordance with their relevant competencies.
4. Accordingly, Liechtenstein holds the view that the strengthening process has to be transparent and inclusive, involving all relevant stakeholders. Liechtenstein welcomes recent initiatives to deepen substantive dialogues between Treaty Bodies and States Parties and looks forward to productive discussions in this regard.
5. For the strengthening of the treaty body system to be firmly anchored in the relevant legal framework, it will be of utmost importance to strictly adhere to the legal competencies of the various stakeholders involved. Any politicization of the highly complex technical questions must be avoided and the continued independence of Treaty Bodies guaranteed.

Independence and expertise of Treaty Body members

6. For Liechtenstein it is crucial to improve the process of nomination and selection of treaty body members in order to strengthen the independence, quality, efficiency and impact of the Treaty Body system. In this regard, Liechtenstein supports the recommendation made at the Poznan meeting that the chairpersons of the Treaty Bodies prepare and adopt guidelines on eligibility and independence of experts.

7. Liechtenstein considers it important that States Parties create open and transparent national election processes and broadly share information with national stakeholders on the overall process.

8. Liechtenstein also supports the idea of providing platforms for candidates standing for election.¹

Harmonisation of the Treaty Body procedures

9. Liechtenstein commends the Treaty Bodies for their continued engagement in the strengthening process and their preparedness to test new approaches, adopt innovative working methods and explore areas suitable for harmonization. As the variety of proposals put forward in the current process shows, there is room for further improvement. Liechtenstein continues to support additional harmonization and coordination of the working methods and procedures of the Treaty Bodies to the extent possible, while taking into account their specific characters. Such measures should be aimed at enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and visibility of the Treaty Body system as a whole, reducing the workload of States Parties and improving the access of States, NGOs and other stakeholders to the system.

10. In this regard, Liechtenstein welcomes proposals to strengthening the Meeting of the Chairpersons while acknowledging that Treaty Bodies have the competence to decide upon the mandate of their chairpersons.

Strengthening the preparation of States Parties' reports

11. Liechtenstein welcomes the new optional reporting procedure (**List of issues prior to reporting; LOIPR**) first applied by the Committee against Torture and the Human Rights Committee. This practice should be adopted by all Treaty Bodies when considering periodic reports as it leads to more focused and in-depth reporting, an enhanced quality of the dialogue and to a reduction of the workload of both States parties and treaty

¹ Inspiration for the modalities of such platforms could be found in the interactive discussions organized by civil society in the context of elections of judges to the International Criminal Court, in the new model of the Advisory Panel for the election of judges on the European Court of Human Rights and in the system which the Human Rights Council has designed in view of the selection of independent mandate holders for its special procedures.

bodies. In addition, more focused and higher quality reports will facilitate a more focused dialogue and Concluding Observations.

12. Treaty Bodies should further encourage States Parties to adhere to the **page limitation of periodic reports** by addressing this issue in the introduction to the Concluding Observations. Additional action to this end could also be envisaged in the framework of meetings of States Parties.

Implementation of Treaty Body outputs and impact on the protection of rights holders

13. Liechtenstein supports the proposal of a **fixed calendar based on 100% compliance rate**. Such reporting would help ensure the equal treatment of all States Parties. The introduction of a calendar would not necessarily entail more meeting time for Treaty Bodies if it is combined with complementary measures such as the format that Treaty Bodies meet in parallel chambers, where and when it is appropriate. Meeting in parallel chambers will also enhance the quality of discussion within Treaty Bodies and thus contribute to a stronger and more focused output.

14. Liechtenstein welcomes and supports the proposal for **more focused and shorter Concluding Observations** of the Treaty Bodies and **harmonized Treaty Body follow-up procedures** with a view to strengthen implementation. **Follow-up visits** (by specific members of the Treaty Bodies and on the invitation of interested States Parties) could provide an important avenue for Treaty Bodies' continued dialogue with States Parties and the various other stakeholders.

Resourcing the Treaty Body system

15. Resourcing the Treaty Body System in an adequate manner to allow for the timely consideration of States' reports is indispensable and a core responsibility of the General Assembly under its human rights agenda. A detailed and comprehensive cost analysis of the Treaty Body System should provide the basis for the adequate provision of resources. Questions of financing should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. In particular, it has to be taken into account that documentation represents the most substantial cost driver, pointing to the limited saving capacities in other areas. Innovative measures to strengthen the efficiency of treaty bodies leading to a significant reduction of documentation and paperwork (including the above-mentioned) should therefore be considered as a matter of priority. In addition, Treaty Bodies could be encouraged to consult and agree on their own standard working languages in addition to the language in which reports are submitted.

Vaduz, 3 February 2012