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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Presidential Statement at the opening of the Meeting for the Selection of the UPR Troikas

-28 February 2008-

Informal "informal" discussions have been pursued on the issue of the Universal Periodic Review in order to agree on the practical modalities for the implementation of the provisions contained in the Institution Building text.

This paper is a reflection of the general consensus on the role of the Troika Members during the preparation for the review and the level of the representation of States in the review. There is also a common understanding regarding the modalities for the selection of the Troikas.

In this respect, the role of the Troikas shall be to collate questions and/or issues in order to facilitate the preparation of the State under Review (SuR) for the interactive dialogue during the review. In doing this, the Troika Members will relay the respective questions and/or issues without altering their meaning in any way. In the facilitation process, the Troika Members shall also refrain from embarking upon, or involving in, any assessment or evaluation of questions/issues raised by the States, as well as of the situation of the human rights of the SuR.

Whilst acknowledging that the level of the State's representation in the review process is its own prerogative, it is advisable that the respective decision take into account the importance of the process.

Regarding the selection of the troikas, provided for in paragraph 18 (d) of the Human Right's Council Institution Building text, we will proceed as follows:

1. For the drawing of lots, the names of the 47 Troika Members will be divided into 5 different bags, organized by regions. For computing reasons, one Troika Member shall be present two times in the respective container. That Member shall be determined by drawing of lots from the 47 Members of the HRC.

2. At the invitation of the President, a representative of each State under review at the 1st and 2nd UPR Working Group session will get to the troika selection desk set up aside the podium. This will be done in the order of consideration at the said sessions.
3. The Representative will first proceed with the drawing by lot of the troika combination from one of the 16 possible combinations as identified by the program developed by the secretariat. Should the representative have requested beforehand that one of the Troika Members be from its own regional group, the drawing should continue, if necessary, until this purpose is served.
4. The Representative will then draw by lot the countries that will be members of the troika, from the 3 bags that correspond to its troika combination.
5. If a State under review wishes to substitute a Troika Member, it may draw a fourth lot from that same bag. Otherwise, the results of the drawing will be announced.
6. The President will assume that selected Troika Member agree to be included in the respective Troikas, unless the wish to be excused from participating in that Troika is indicated by raising the flag.
7. Should a Troika Member excuse itself from a participating in the respective Troika, the State under review will proceed to draw another lot from the same bag as the one where the concerned Troika Member had been drawn from. This procedure shall be followed in case other Troika Members also excuse themselves from a review. It is understood that States that are selected for the Troikas shall exert self-restraint in using their right to be excused from this selection, in line with the responsibility of being a Member of the HRC.
8. If the State under review has not requested the substitution of a Troika Member and it wishes to do so, it may do it at this stage.
9. The President shall announce the final result of each drawing.
10. If a State is not able to be represented in the selection of the troikas, it will notify the President and request her or him to draw the corresponding lots. The representative of the country concerned will be informed of the results of the drawing in a timely manner.

Some other aspects like the specific modalities for the discussion in the UPR Working Group, or questions related to the adoption of the outcome by the Plenary, require further consultation. They shall be addressed before the review process actually starts in April.

I would like to thank all delegations for their cooperative engagement in solving these very important issues.