



**International
Human Rights
Instruments**

Distr.
GENERAL

HRI/MC/2008/2
22 May 2008

Original: ENGLISH

Twentieth meeting of chairpersons
of human rights treaty bodies
Geneva, 26 and 27 June 2008

Seventh inter-committee meeting
of human rights treaty bodies
Geneva, 23-25 June 2008

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE SIXTH INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING AND THE
NINETEENTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS***

Note by the Secretariat

The present report contains information on the steps taken by the human rights treaty bodies and the Secretariat to implement the recommendations adopted at the sixth inter-committee meeting, held from 18 to 20 June 2007, and the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, held on 21 and 22 June 2007.

* Late submission.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report provides information on the follow-up to the substantive recommendations of the sixth inter-committee meeting, held from 18 to 20 June 2007, and the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons, held on 21 and 22 June 2007. It also includes information on other developments in the human rights treaty body system. Annex I lists the upcoming elections for human rights treaty bodies, and annex II lists draft general comments or recommendations under preparation.
2. The report is complemented by the report on the working methods of the human rights treaty bodies (HRI/MC/2008/4), which contains information on cooperation with special procedures, modalities of the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the treaty bodies, liaison with United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and follow-up to concluding observations.
3. The report is further complemented by the report on reservations to human rights treaties (HRI/MC/2008/5) and the report on human rights indicators (HRI/MC/2008/3).

II. FOLLOW-UP TO POINTS OF AGREEMENT OF THE SIXTH INTER-COMMITTEE MEETING

A. Inter-committee meeting

- (i) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated the view expressed by many, including States parties, that the inter-committee meeting provided a useful forum for discussing matters of mutual concern and strengthening coordination among the treaty bodies, and recommended that the General Assembly consider the possibility of convening such meetings on a regular basis.
 - (ii) Recognizing the need to improve and harmonize further the working methods of the human rights treaty bodies, the inter-committee meeting considered it appropriate that it convene twice annually, with the participation of the chairpersons of the human rights treaty bodies, who were ex officio members for that purpose. The inter-committee meeting would, inter alia, make recommendations for the improvement and harmonization of working methods of the human rights treaty bodies. As usual, all recommendations of the inter-committee meeting should be adopted in consultation and with the approval of all the human rights treaty bodies.
4. Pursuant to the above recommendations, the eighth inter-committee meeting will be convened in the latter part of 2008. The seventh inter-committee meeting should consider developing a programme of work on possible areas for improvement and harmonization of the working methods of human rights treaty bodies, including targets and timelines. A comparative working paper on the working methods of treaty bodies, including in relation to lists of issues and questions, publication of the identity of country rapporteurs and working group members, and the consideration of implementation of human rights treaties in the absence of the State party's report has been prepared by the Secretariat to assist the meeting.

B. Consultation on proposals for reform of the United Nations human rights framework

- (iii) The sixth inter-committee meeting noted with appreciation that the Secretariat had compiled a report containing a wide range of views relating to the reform of the treaty body system expressed by treaty bodies, States parties, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders. It requested the Secretariat to keep this document updated and make it available through the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- (iv) The sixth inter-committee meeting recommended that the Secretariat should continue to organize, in appropriate forums, consultations among the treaty bodies, States parties, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other stakeholders to discuss all proposals in the context of treaty body reform.

5. The Secretariat has made efforts to keep the document containing views on treaty body reform updated and is in the process of making it available on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

6. The Secretariat has briefed treaty bodies on progress with respect to treaty body reform at their respective sessions.

7. Representatives of human rights treaty bodies, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations and other parts of civil society participated in a workshop on United Nations treaty body reform jointly organized by the University of Mannheim and OHCHR, with the support of the Foreign Office of Germany, in Berlin, on 2 and 3 July 2007. At the workshop, participants emphasized the importance of harmonization, streamlining and simplification of the treaty body system, and the importance of the inter-committee meeting as a vehicle to promote and coordinate reform. A seminar on the reform of the human rights treaty monitoring bodies, with the participation of treaty body members and OHCHR, was convened by the International Commission of Jurists on 7 December 2007.

C. Reservations

- (v) The sixth inter-committee meeting welcomed the report of the working group on reservations (HRI/MC/2007/5 and Add. 1). It endorsed the recommendations formulated by the working group (HRI/MC/2007/5, para. 16) and recommended that the working group should be maintained and meet if required.

8. Pursuant to paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 61/34, the International Law Commission convened a meeting at its fifty-ninth session with United Nations experts in the field of human rights, including representatives from human rights treaty bodies, in order to discuss issues relating to reservations to human rights treaties, on 15 and 16 May 2007. Members

of the working group participated in that meeting. A report on the meeting has been prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the reservations of the International Law Commission (ILC(LIX)/RT/CRP.1), which was made available to participants (see also HRI/MC/2008/5).

D. Revised harmonized reporting guidelines

- (vi) The sixth inter-committee meeting requested that the Secretariat send a note verbale to all the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva recommending that the approved harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents, contained in document HRI/GEN/2/Rev.4, should be used by States parties when submitting a report to any human rights treaty body. Briefings with States parties to further disseminate those guidelines and clarify issues related to their implementation should also be organized by the Secretariat.

9. A note verbale recommending the use of the new harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common-core document and treaty-specific documents, was sent to all the Permanent Missions to the United Nations on 30 July 2007.

10. At its seventy-first session, in August 2007, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination adopted guidelines for the CERD-specific document, while the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women adopted guidelines for the CEDAW-specific document at its fortieth session, in February 2008. At its eighth session, in April 2008, the Migrant Workers Committee adopted its treaty-specific guidelines for periodic reports. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights commenced, at its fortieth session, in May 2008, the adoption of revised treaty-specific reporting guidelines, which take into account the guidelines for the common-core document, and envisages to complete this process at its next session in November 2008. At its fortieth session, in April/May 2008, the Committee against Torture requested the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of revised treaty-specific reporting guidelines.

11. At its ninety-second session, in March 2008, the Human Rights Committee discussed a revision of its guidelines, to ensure, inter alia, their compatibility with the guidelines for the common-core document. Some members recommended new guidelines for the whole reporting process, including drafting of the list of issues, dialogue with the State party's delegation and time limits for oral interventions. The Committee will continue its discussion on the matter at its ninety-third session, in July 2008, taking into account in particular the outcome of the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council.

12. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appointed a member to prepare draft guidelines for the treaty-specific document, which would include reporting under the Convention and its two Optional Protocols, and will discuss this matter at its forty-eight session, in May/June 2008. The Committee adopted its revised guidelines on reporting under the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and under the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, in September 2006 and September 2007, respectively.

E. Liaison with specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes

- (vii) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated its recommendation that the Secretariat should organize a meeting in 2008 with representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and treaty body members to further discuss modalities for enhanced cooperation and interaction with regard to treaty reporting and follow-up processes.
- (viii) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated previous recommendations that all treaty bodies should establish a mechanism of rapporteurs or focal points to enhance cooperation and facilitate more effective interaction on country-specific and thematic issues and follow up with the United Nations specialized agencies.

13. A meeting on enhanced cooperation and interaction with regard to treaty reporting and follow-up processes among specialized agencies, funds and programmes and treaty body members will be convened in the second half of 2008. With regard to support by United Nations entities for the work of human rights treaty bodies, United Nations country teams have begun to collaborate to provide information to some of the human rights treaty bodies, in particular to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. A day-long meeting of the Committee on the Rights of the Child with representatives of UNICEF headquarters and regional officers was convened in Geneva on 16 May 2008 in order to develop modalities for greater cooperation in the reporting process.

F. Participation of non-governmental organizations

- (ix) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated previous recommendations that NGOs should send information well in advance of treaty body sessions to allow committee members the opportunity to take those important submissions into account and to continue to disseminate the conclusions of the treaty bodies and report on their implementation. To that end, the Secretariat was encouraged to establish a user-friendly master calendar that would provide information well in advance on the timetable for all the treaty bodies and for contributions relating to lists of issues and shadow reports for country reviews.
- (x) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated the recommendation of the two previous inter-committee meetings regarding the modalities of NGO participation in the monitoring activities of treaty bodies and recommended that the issue should be placed on the agenda of the seventh inter-committee meeting. The Secretariat was encouraged to widely disseminate the OHCHR handbook for NGOs and to develop an easily accessible treaty body extranet site where NGO contributions could be posted continuously.
- (xi) The sixth inter-committee meeting noted the need for broader NGO representation, including better geographical representation, both in the inter-committee meeting and more generally in the treaty body system. The Secretariat was invited to facilitate the

participation of national NGOs from developing countries and to explore alternative means of facilitating such participation, including the possibility of video conferences.

14. A user-friendly master calendar of the timetable of human rights treaty body sessions will be made available on the OHCHR website. In 2008, the OHCHR Civil Society Unit is to review the *Handbook for NGOs*, which is currently available online in English, Arabic and Spanish. The revised version will be available, including in hard copy, in the second half of 2008.

15. OHCHR has developed web pages relating to each treaty body, through which all documentation, including submissions by non-governmental organizations, is accessible.

16. Treaty bodies have continued to interact with international and national non-governmental organizations, and many of the latter have attended treaty body sessions. For example, during its fortieth session, in January/February 2008, the participation of representatives of national non-governmental organizations was facilitated by an international non-governmental organization, the International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific. The NGO Group for the Committee on the Rights of the Child continued to coordinate and facilitate the participation of national non-governmental organizations in the pre-sessions and sessions of the Committee. The Association for the Prevention of Torture, the International Federation of Human Rights and the World Organization Against Torture facilitate the participation of local and national non-governmental organizations at sessions of the Convention against Torture. The International Federation of Human Rights and FIAN International have played this role with regard to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In a number of States parties, national coalitions of non-governmental organizations have also emerged, formed for the purpose of preparing parallel reports and facilitating the participation of national organizations in the work of the Committee.

G. National human rights institutions

(xii) The sixth inter-committee meeting recommended that the conclusions of the round table on the role of national human rights institutions in the treaty reporting process, held in Berlin, in November 2006, should form a basis for the discussion on the matter in future harmonization meetings of the treaty bodies.

(xiii) The sixth inter-committee meeting reiterated its previous recommendations that treaty bodies should continue their engagement with national human rights institutions that conform with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134, annex). In addition, it encouraged further dialogue with the bureau of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights to enhance and strengthen the interaction between national human rights institutions and treaty bodies.

17. A workshop of national human rights institutions and treaty bodies, with the participation of representatives of the Committee against Torture, the Sub-committee on Prevention of Torture, the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, nine national institutions and several non-governmental organizations was convened in Geneva, from 26 to 28 November 2007. Participants were strongly supportive of the

development of a harmonized approach by treaty bodies to engagement with national human rights institutions, and advocated the preparation of guidelines for national institutions on interaction with human rights treaty bodies. They also welcomed the forthcoming publication by the German Institute of Human Rights of a handbook on such interaction.

18. With regard to treaty body practice, the Committee on the Rights of the Child invites all national human rights institutions, irrespective of their status in relation to the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, to provide input into the consideration of reports and the reviews under the two Optional Protocols of its Convention. As relevant, the Committee also contacts ombudsmen for children, including members of the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children. The great majority of national institutions that were actively contacted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child have substantively contributed to the reporting process by submitting written reports and, on several occasions representatives participated in pre-sessional working groups. The Migrant Workers Committee also invites national institutions to submit information on the countries under consideration. The Committee against Torture and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights welcome information from the institutions and systematically solicit their contributions. Time is also set aside by the Committee against Torture for meetings with institutions from individual States parties prior to the consideration of a report. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights solicits inputs from institutions through the National Institutions Unit of OHCHR, which liaises with institutions for this purpose. Since the appointment of a Geneva representative of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the representative has also begun to deliver information and statements to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on behalf of national institutions in the States parties whose reports are due to be considered at the relevant session.

19. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination formalized a new procedure with respect to national human rights institutions through an amendment in its rules of procedure (rule 40 (2)) at its seventy-second session, in August 2007. The Committee against Torture meets with national institutions in a private meeting during its sessions the day before the Committee considers the State party concerned. At its fortieth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women seeks input from institutions through the National Institutions Unit of OHCHR. The Committee also adopted a statement on its relationship with national institutions and has allocated time for their participation in the provisional agenda of its forty-first session.

20. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is currently considering how to include participation of national human rights institutions in its formal agenda. On 20 May 2008, the Committee convened a seminar on the role of national institutions in the protection of economic, social and cultural rights, in cooperation with the University of Alcalá (Spain) and the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudsmen. The participating members of the Committee expressed the hope that they would be able to convene more such events in the future with national institutions from that region and others.

H. Ratification of the core international human rights treaties

- (xv) The sixth inter-committee meeting recommended that all the treaty bodies should actively promote ratification of the other core international human rights treaties, in particular the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in their constructive dialogue with States parties and in their concluding observations.

21. In constructive dialogue with States parties and concluding observations, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women encourage ratification of human rights treaties to which the State is not party. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination routinely recommends ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which most directly relates to the Committee's mandate, but does not address other human rights treaties. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights routinely promotes ratification of the Convention, and frequently the ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

I. Statistical information relating to human rights

- (xvi) The sixth inter-committee meeting welcomed the report on the follow-up to the recommendations of the fifth inter-committee meeting regarding the work on statistical information for use by the treaty bodies (A/61/385, annex, para. 55). It encouraged the Secretariat to take that work forward and continue the validation of the indicators, and looked forward to the report on those activities to the seventh inter-committee meeting, in 2008. Furthermore, it requested the Secretariat to brief each of the treaty bodies on the progress of that work prior to the next inter-committee meeting.

22. In 2007, OHCHR continued the process of country-level consultations to validate the conceptual and methodological framework outlined in the report on indicators for monitoring compliance with international human rights instruments (HRI/MC/2006/7). In July and October 2007, OHCHR organized two subregional workshops on indicators in New Delhi and Kampala in collaboration with the national human rights commissions of India and Uganda. OHCHR work on indicators was presented at an international workshop in Brazil, in June 2007, a Latin American regional workshop in Chile, in June 2007, and a national level consultation in Brazil, in December 2007.

23. In December 2007, OHCHR organized an expert consultation to consider proposals on indicators for four additional human rights: the right to work, the right to social security, the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to a fair trial. A second expert consultation was held in April 2008 to finalize the conceptual and methodological framework and to fine tune the list of illustrative indicators identified with regard to selected human rights: the right to life, the right to liberty and security of person, the right to participate in public

affairs, the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right to health, the right to adequate food, the right to adequate housing, the right to education, as well as the four human rights discussed in December 2007. Participants included members of treaty bodies, special rapporteurs, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (Statistics Division), UN-Habitat, the World Health Organization, non-governmental organizations and other parts of civil society.

24. In 2007 and 2008, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Migrant Workers Committee were briefed on OHCHR work on indicators; the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will be briefed in 2008. A user's manual will be developed and further workshops convened at the country level, as well as consultations with other stakeholders and United Nations organizations (see also HRI/MC/2008/3).

III. FOLLOW-UP TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING OF CHAIRPERSONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

A. Relationship with special procedures mandate-holders

Participants in the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons recommended that all treaty bodies consider developing modalities for enhanced interaction with the special procedures mandate-holders, including with a view to developing effective approaches to the universal periodic review mechanism, in accordance with their respective mandates, and coordinating country-specific inputs to that mechanism (A/62/224, para. 24).

Participants in the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons further recommended that the Secretariat should seek ways and means to facilitate interaction between the treaty bodies and the special procedures, not only during the annual joint meetings but also with respect to strengthening direct interaction, as appropriate, during sessions of the treaty bodies (A/62/224, para. 25).

25. At its ninetieth session, in July 2007, the Human Rights Committee designated a rapporteur mandated to make recommendations for the development of procedures and guidelines for enhanced cooperation with special procedures mandate-holders, in particular with a view to developing effective approaches to the universal periodic review mechanism.

26. The special procedures mandate-holders' travel schedule was provided to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to promote greater interaction during official missions and sessions. Staff supporting the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, attended the fortieth session of the Committee, in particular the consideration of Saudi Arabia, to which the Special Rapporteur conducted an official mission from 4 to 13 February 2008.

27. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination interacted with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief at its seventy-first session and with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at its seventy-second session. The Migrant Workers Committee and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants issued joined statements during international migrants day in December 2007 and have regular ongoing interactions.
28. At its fortieth session in May 2008, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was briefed by staff responsible supporting the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief with regard to their recent visits to a country that the Committee was about to consider.
29. The Committee on the Rights of the Child is scheduled to meet with the Special Rapporteur on the right to education during its day of general discussion on the right of the child to education in emergency situations, to be held at its forty-ninth session in September 2008. At its fortieth session, the Committee against Torture also requested that a meeting with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment be convened annually, at its November session.

B. Human Rights Council

Participants in the nineteenth meeting of chairpersons welcomed the adoption of resolution 5/1 on institution-building of the Human Rights Council, including the universal periodic review mechanism. The chairpersons were of the opinion that the review presented both a number of opportunities and challenges. They underlined the complementary and mutually reinforcing nature of the treaty body system and the future review and emphasized the importance of a continuing dialogue on that matter. They appreciated that the findings and recommendations of treaty bodies would form part of the basis of the review and highlighted the role of the concluding observations in that regard. The chairpersons further recognized the need for developing effective cooperation between the treaty bodies and the Council (A/62/224, para. 26).

30. The Human Rights Committee has designated a rapporteur to present recommendations on the Committee's relationship with the Human Rights Council and has discussed the preparatory work of the Committee in relation to the universal periodic review, and its impact on the work of treaty bodies. It also requested the rapporteur to attend, as an observer, a session of the universal periodic review in May 2008 in order to make recommendations for the Committee at its ninety-third session, in July 2008.
31. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women met with the President of the Human Rights Council at its fortieth session, and discussed possible cooperation, including with regard to the incorporation of women's rights and gender perspectives in the work of the Council, in particular in relation to Council resolution 6/30, in which the Council decided to incorporate into its programme of work sufficient and adequate time, at minimum an annual full-day meeting, to discuss the human rights of women.

32. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held informal meetings with delegations, in particular the sponsors of the resolution on the rights of the child, to exchange views on cooperation between the Committee and the Council. The Migrant Workers Committee and the Committee against Torture were briefed by the staff supporting the Council with regard to the first universal periodic review working group.

33. In accordance with Council resolution 5/1, the OHCHR compilation for the universal periodic review drew on information contained in the reports of treaty bodies and special procedures, including observations and comments by the State concerned and other relevant official United Nations documents. At the first and second sessions of the universal periodic review working group in April and May 2008, during which 32 countries were reviewed, frequent reference was made to treaty body recommendations, the importance of ratification of human rights treaties and the removal of reservations. The Committee against Torture also made reference to the discussion in the universal periodic review working group in its consideration of the report of Indonesia.

IV. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

34. On 4 April 2008, at its fifth session, the Working Group on an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights adopted its report and agreed to transmit a draft optional protocol to the Human Rights Council for its consideration (A/HRC/8/7). The draft would invest the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with competence to consider communications meeting standard admissibility criteria submitted by or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals under the jurisdiction of a State party claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in Parts II and III of the Covenant by that State party. In cases where the State party concerned has recognized the Committee's competence in that regard, the Committee would also be competent to receive and consider inter-State communications or to conduct an inquiry in cases where it receives reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations of the rights set forth in Parts II and III of the Covenant. The draft builds on existing communications and inquiry procedures, and contains some novel provisions, including article 4, providing that the Committee may, if necessary, decline to consider a communication where it does not reveal that the author has suffered a clear disadvantage, unless the Committee considers that the communication raises a serious issue of general importance. Article 8, paragraph 4 provides that, when examining communications, the Committee will consider the reasonableness of the steps taken by the State party in accordance with Part II of the Covenant, and bear in mind that the State party may adopt a range of possible policy measures for the implementation of the rights set forth in the Covenant. Article 14, concerning international assistance and cooperation, provides, *inter alia*, for the establishment of a trust fund to provide expert and technical assistance to States parties, with their consent, for the enhanced implementation of the rights contained in the Covenant, thus contributing to building national capacities in the area of economic, social and cultural rights.

35. On 3 May 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol entered into force. A total of 26 States are party to the Convention, of which 16 are party to the Optional Protocol. The initial election of members to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities must be held no later than six months after the entry into force of the Convention. Members are elected for a term of four years, and are eligible for re-election once. The Convention mandates the Committee to consider the reports of States parties, which are to be submitted within two years of entry into force of the Convention for the State party concerned, and every four years thereafter, and further whenever the Committee requests. The Optional Protocol provides the Committee with competence to consider communications from or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals who claim to be victims of a violation of a State party of the Convention and the Protocol of the provisions of the Convention in cases where such communications meet the admissibility criteria set out in the Protocol. The Optional Protocol also provides for an inquiry procedure, which States parties to the Protocol may opt out of at the time of signature, ratification or accession.

36. Several treaty bodies have launched collaborative initiatives with other treaty bodies. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has invited the Migrant Workers Committee to collaborate in the preparation of a joint general recommendation on migrant women. Two members of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights participated in the general discussions on resources for the rights of the child and responsibility of States, organized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in September 2007. The Committee on the Rights of the Child is also considering modalities of cooperating with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

37. With regard to follow-up to the recommendations of human rights treaty bodies, in the context of the OHCHR project on strengthening the implementation of human rights treaty recommendations through the enhancement of national protection mechanisms, activities have continued for representatives of Governments, the judiciary, national human rights institutions, non-governmental organizations, lawyers and the media. National actors in 26 countries have benefited from these activities, which are aimed to increase the participation of civil society in the work of treaty bodies and to enhance the follow-up and implementation of treaty body recommendations at the national level. The sixth and last Geneva-based training workshop in the framework of this project was organized from 12 to 16 November 2007, involving participants from Guyana, Indonesia and the Philippines. Preparatory workshops were held in all three countries prior to the Geneva event.

38. Workshops to take stock of and analyse the level of implementation of treaty body recommendations and to develop specific plans of action to further enhance the implementation of outstanding recommendations were held in Mauritius and Mexico late in 2007 and early in 2008, respectively. Other similar workshops are planned in Georgia, Indonesia, Morocco and the Philippines in 2008. OHCHR is also convening regional-level workshops, together with judicial colloquia, in Bangkok and Panama in the latter half of 2008. As parts of project activities, a specific web page and a booklet compiling information and good practices in follow-up to and implementation of treaty body recommendations are being planned.

39. UNICEF has facilitated follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and provided technical assistance when appropriate. Members of the Committee regularly participate in follow-up activities at the national level, with the support of Governments, United Nations entities, including UNICEF and non-governmental organizations. UNICEF collaborated with OHCHR and Plan International in the organization of a subregional workshop on follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Burkina Faso, in November 2007, during which Committee members, representatives of relevant governmental, United Nations and non-governmental organizations discussed challenges of implementation of human rights obligations.

Annexes

Annex I

Overview of upcoming treaty body elections

Treaty body	Date	Venue
CESCR	29 April 2008	Geneva
CEDAW	30 July 2008	New York
CCPR	4 September 2008	New York
OPCAT	30 October 2008	Geneva
Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	6 November 2008 (tentative)	New York

Annex II

General comments under development

CCPR	Obligations of States Parties under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
CEDAW and CMW	General comment on migrant women
CEDAW	General comment on State obligations (art. 2)
CESCR	Right to take part in cultural life (art. 15 (1) (a)) Right to non-discrimination (art. 2 (2))
CRC	The right of the child to be heard (art. 12) Rights on indigenous children
