



General Assembly

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Agenda item 1

Organizational and procedural matters

Note verbale dated 25 October 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Belgium, on behalf of the European Union, addressed to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council

The European Union would like to express its appreciation to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council for its daily support for the work and functioning of the Council.

The European Union requests that the general comments made by the European Union on 1 October 2010 in relation to the statement made by the President of the Council with regard to the dialogue between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council* be published on the website of the Council as a document of the fifteenth session.

* Reproduced in the annex, as received and in the language of submission only.

Annex

Fifteenth session of the Human Rights Council: general comments of the European Union in relation to the statement of the President on the dialogue between OHCHR and the Human Rights Council

Mr. President,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the European Union and would like to comment on the statement you have just made.

The mandate of the High Commissioner is set out in UNGA resolution 48/141. Her sole line of accountability is to the UN Secretary-General. The Office of the High Commissioner is independent.

The EU attaches great importance to the ongoing dialogue between the UN Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner. We also attach great importance to respecting UN rules and procedures.

High Commissioner Pillay has made considerable efforts to further strengthen the dialogue between her Office and all stakeholders in Geneva, which the EU welcomes and comments. In this regard, we note her recent initiative to share the Secretary-General's Proposed Strategic Framework for Programme 19 with all delegations in Geneva, prior to its submission to the Committee for Programme and Coordination. We also note that no State responded to her invitation to pass on comments.

There is already a clear process in place within the UN to agree on the Strategic Framework of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. And as part of the UN Secretariat, the Strategic Framework for the OHCHR is agreed under the auspices of the UN Secretary General and through the Committee for Programme Coordination in New York. The Human Rights Council has no role in these internal management policies.

The EU notes your statement Mr. President in the understanding that it does not alter in any way the independence of the High Commissioner or her accountability to the UN Secretary-General alone. It can not infringe on established UN rules and procedure.

The EU requests that this statement is reflected in the official report of the session.

Thank you Mr. President.
