



Third round of consultations for the long-term efficiency process
of the Human Rights Council

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Statement by
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Agenda item1

Improving the Annual Programme of Work of Human Rights Council

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue welcomes the efforts of the Human Rights Council to enhance its long-term efficiency through the holding of informal consultative sessions. The compilation of proposals addressing the different agenda items marks the beginning of a meaningful process to fulfil the Council's mandate and purpose, as set out in GA resolution 60/251 and in the IB Package.

In view of the proposals based on the non-papers on agenda items 1-3, the Geneva Centre wishes to make the following recommendations to decrease the workload of the Human Rights Council by 15% a year. This is calculated on the basis of the current 75 working days encompassing 10 full weeks devoted to three regular sessions annually and 27 working days for the UPR Working Group sessions.

These will be detailed in the three different statements to be delivered by the Geneva Centre.

Under agenda item 1, our suggestions will bring out the annual saving of **49 working hours**:

- **Firstly**, any agenda item not discussed separately in a given session should be included in the general debate of the same session and allow for the possibility, if necessary, to adopt a corresponding draft resolution under the given agenda item.
- **Secondly**, thematic panel debates should be reduced from three to two hours and that panel debates should not exceed 10 per calendar year. This methodology would allow the Council to save time and resources on managing such events during the regular sessions of the Council. The decision to reduce the duration of panel debates from three to two hours would enable the Council to save **10 hours (one hour per debate)**. In addition, the decision to organize 10 per annum, instead of 14 panel debates held this year, would likewise enable the Council to save an additional **12 hours**. In order to enhance the efficiency of the debate in this tighter time frame, the format of thematic panel debates should become more action- and outcome-oriented. Three rules should be observed:
 - o **i)** Prospective participants send in short comments and questions by e-mail prior to the date of the meeting on the basis of a concept note they will have received sufficiently ahead of time;
 - o **ii)** At the meeting, panellists comment on communications received previously and request participants to take a position on specific questions. Panellists should also respond to specific questions that come from the floor;
 - o **iii)** The Chair of each meeting ensures that the debate remains focused.
- **Finally**, with regard to the UPR, the Geneva Centre recommends keeping the current four-year cycle for the review of States. However, in view of the accumulation of recommendations of three previous UPR cycles their full implementation is now becoming a priority. Therefore, we suggest that out of 48-country reviews per year, 32 countries undergo full review whereas 16 countries drawn by lot be subject to a shorter implementation review of past UPRs. In this way, all countries would either have had a full country assessment or a shorter implementation review during the four-year period and all countries would have had a full implementation review during



an extended six-year cycle. The Geneva Centre also recommends that the time devoted to the implementation of previous recommendations of UPR cycles is reduced from **three and a half hours to two hours** for the implementation review. On an annual basis, it would allow the Council to devote **36 instead of 63 hours** for implementation reviews rather than full reviews. The Council would therefore save **27 hours** per annum.

I thank you for your attention.

