Dear members of National Human Rights Institutions,

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all the participants of the 10th International Conference for National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) on “Business and Human Rights: the Role of National Human Rights Institutions.”

The Conference which was held in Edinburgh, Scotland, from 8 to 10 October 2010, was hosted by the Scottish Parliament and jointly organised by the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (ICC). Your statements, presentations, and contributions to the plenary sessions and working groups were welcomed and appreciated, and further contributed to the success of the Conference. These interventions were enriched by the wealth of experiences and best practices shared from your respective regions. NHRIs were also provided an opportunity to establish closer links of cooperation with governments, NGOs, the United Nations and business corporations.

The Paris Principles provide NHRIs a broad mandate to promote and protect human rights and address the most critical human rights issues at the national level, including through promotion of the rule of law and ensuring accountability. Therefore, we sincerely hope that the Conference enhanced your awareness and knowledge on human rights and business, and the best practices and knowledge acquired will be useful to your work.

We are confident that the Edinburgh Declaration that was unanimously adopted will enhance NHRI priorities and strategies with regard to business and human rights and give guidance to the development activities and action plans at the national and regional level.

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Please find attached the Edinburgh Declaration, in English, French and Spanish. We encourage you to use it and disseminate it within your regions.

We hope to count on your assistance and cooperation again in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Navanethem Pillay
High Commissioner for Human Rights

Rosslyn Noonan
ICC Chair

Alan Miller
Chairperson, Scottish Human Rights Commission

Attachments:

1. Edinburgh Declaration (English, French and Spanish)