ITEM 8: Follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

Check against delivery

Madam President,


The APF supports the statement just made by the ICC. Like the ICC, we welcome the Secretary-General’s 2012 report on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. This year’s report describes NHRIs as ‘part and parcel of a strong and effective national human rights system’, yet it also highlights the important contributions that Paris Principles-compliant NHRIs make to the United Nations (UN) human rights system. This recognises the unique role that NHRIs serve in bridging their countries and the international system: NHRI contributions inform the discussions and decisions of UN fora, while their work in-country helps to translate UN outcomes into tangible change on the ground.

The APF is particularly supportive of recommendations 3 and 8 in the Secretary-General’s report. They encourage Paris Principles-compliant NHRIs to look beyond the Council by interacting with and advocating for independent participation opportunities in other UN fora, including the:

• Human rights treaty body system
• Commission on the Status of Women
• Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and
• Open-ended Working Group on Ageing.

An increasing number of UN fora are taking incremental steps to advance participation opportunities for NHRIs in their work and processes. A clear example is the strengthening of contribution opportunities for Paris Principles-compliant NHRIs at the Council through the Council review process; progress that the General Assembly endorsed in its 2011 resolution on NHRIs.¹


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The APF supports the steps that the Secretary-General, the Council, and other UN fora are collectively taking to strengthen NHRI participation. We are committed to this project, which we see culminating in the mainstreaming of participation opportunities for Paris Principles-compliant NHRs across the UN’s human rights-related work.

Thank you.