HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL TASK FORCE
USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

ICC CONTRIBUTION
12 JANUARY 2012

Introduction

1. The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council Task Force to explore the feasibility of the use of information technology, such as video conferencing or video messaging.

2. The ICC considers that the introduction of information technology (IT) such as video conferencing and video messaging will enhance access and effective and equal participation by national level actors from all regions in the work of the Human Rights Council. It will also keep with the Human Rights Council's obligation in General Assembly resolution 60/251 to ensure the most effective participation of these entities in the Council's work.

3. The ICC supports the introduction of information technology for all national level and other actors listed in resolution 16/21 (paragraph 59), including Paris Principles compliant national human rights institutions (NHRIs), non-governmental organizations in consultative status, UN agencies and non resident State delegations.

4. This paper offers proposals on modalities for IT contributions specifically by Paris Principles compliant NHRIs.

Ensuring verification of credentials and speakers' identity

5. In line with resolution 16/21 paragraph 59, the ICC recognizes the need to ensure that NHRI contributions via video conferencing and video messaging fully comply with the Human Rights Council rules of procedures and rules concerning accreditation.

6. In keeping with established rules and procedures, the ICC envisages the following processes:

   • A NHRI wishing to present a statement via video message or video conference will submit a request to the Human Rights Council Secretariat; and
   • After verification of the credentials and accreditation status of the requesting NHRIs based on the OHCHR Chart of Accredited National Human Rights Institutions, the Human Rights Council Secretariat inscribes the requesting NHRI in the speakers' list.

7. To ensure that the speaker in the video represents the NHRI, the ICC suggests the procedure be as follows:
• The opportunity to use IT contributions will be limited to the Head and Secretary General of each NHRI, or to their designated representative by express written authorization duly submitted to the Human Rights Council Secretariat. The identity of the Head and Secretary General can be confirmed by the OHCHR and the ICC.

8. As per previous practice, the ICC Geneva Representative will continue to liaise with NHRI and the Human Rights Council Secretariat to facilitate the process.

**Ensuring compliance with the Human Rights Council rules of procedures**

9. The ICC through the ICC Geneva Representative offers advice and assistance to help its members (A status accredited NHRI) engage with the Human Rights Council. This includes advice about the relevant Human Rights Council rules of procedures and modalities, including allocated speaking time and points of order.

10. This assistance has allowed NHRI to effectively engage with the Human Rights Council while fully complying with the Human Rights Council rules of procedures and modalities. Accordingly, the ICC is confident that NHRI contributions via video conferences or video messaging will likewise comply with established rules of procedures and modalities.

11. In the unlikely event of an infringement of the Human Rights Council rules of procedure, the ICC suggests that - similarly as for oral statements delivered in the room - the Human Rights Council President pause the intervention and clarifies the alleged infringement.

**Ensuring effective and equal participation of NHRI**

12. The ICC considers that the introduction of information technology such as video conferencing and video messaging will enhance access and effective and equal participation by national level actors from all regions in the work of the Human Rights Council.

13. The introduction of information technology will particularly facilitate the contributions of NHRI that are remote from Geneva and ease NHRI's financial burden, especially for those NHRI from less developed countries.

14. In line with its mission to advise and assist NHRI in their engagement with the Human Rights Council, the ICC will produce targeted information and advice to guide NHRI through the processes of video conferencing and video messaging. An OHCHR information note specifically for NHRI video conferences and video messages will also assist. This information will be widely distributed and published on OHCHR and ICC webpages.