

JOINT STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL STRENGTHENING

Speech | 23-03-2018

Human Rights Council 37th Session

Concluding statement delivered by the Kingdom of the Netherlands

23 March 2018

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of 49 States, including Albania, Andorra, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ghana, Georgia, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, The United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Zambia.

The Human Rights Council has made a marked difference in the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide. It has the ability to contribute significantly to the advancement of human rights. This was again demonstrated this 37th session by the way it addressed many relevant thematic and country situations.

We believe that the Council's effectiveness and credibility can be further enhanced. The Council can do even better in preventing and monitoring violations in all countries worldwide, supporting States in their implementation of obligations, promoting accountability for perpetrators, and enhancing access to remedy and justice for victims. We should continuously consider ways to further

strengthen the Council's influence and impact on the ground. The links and complementarity between the work of the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, as well as the Security Council, could also be strengthened.

There is a need for all of us to demonstrate leadership and collectively make improvements aimed at strengthening the Council. There is room for improvement in terms of the Council's working methods and efficiency, its agenda and annual programme of work, the responsibilities and engagement of its members, its delivery of capacity-building and technical support, and the fulfilment of its mandate to prevent violations. We pledge to promote progress in these areas within the existing IB package.

Mr. President,

At the opening of this 37th session the Council approved the restructuring of panel discussions as a temporary efficiency measure in order to address the urgent need to streamline the Council's working methods and efficiency. Now as this session has come to a close we look forward to forthcoming additional proposals. It is important that we all work together in order to ensure that the Council can continue to meet for the required full ten (10) weeks. We stand ready to constructively support your efforts aimed at finding the necessary broad cross-regional support for the adoption of short-term efficiency measures.

We also fully support the need to find long-term sustainable solutions that will strengthen the Council's working methods and efficiency with the overall aim to preserve and further enhance the Council effectiveness, its unique role and value and wish to express our gratitude for your personal endeavors and leadership in this regard.

The signatories of this Joint Statement are firmly committed to an inclusive and transparent effort to strengthen the Council and will engage constructively with the Bureau and other delegations in any such efforts. This process should also envisage and enable the meaningful participation of civil society actors working at the national, regional and international levels.

Thank you.