**Human Rights Council**

**41st session**

**Item 8**

**Joint Statement on the UN treaty bodies strengthening process**

Mr. President,

Belgium and Costa Rica have the honour to make this statement on behalf of a group of more than 50 countries who are strong proponents of the UN human rights treaty body system.

The treaty body system is a key component of the wider UN human rights framework. Treaty bodies contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide as they monitor state compliance with their international obligations and develop general recommendations on their application.

As we approach the 2020 review of the human rights treaty body system, we wish to reiterate our strong support for GA resolution 68/268 and the improvements introduced by this resolution to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

Our ultimate goal has always been to reinforce the implementation of States’ obligations, to preserve the integrity and the independence of the treaty bodies for the benefit of the rights-holders and the victims of human rights violations on the ground, and to safeguard the continued involvement of civil society in the treaty body work.

We wish to underline that we remain committed to this goal. We will continue to work constructively in favor of an effective, independent, accessible, strong and sustainable system. Its unique value needs to be preserved. Where needed the system should be further strengthened, inter alia by introducing more streamlined and coherent working methods. We should also explore ways to enhance the consistency in the application of individual communications procedures.

Furthermore, we welcome recent steps taken by treaty bodies to harmonize the implementation of the San Jose Guidelines and we encourage them to pursue their efforts in addressing the issue of reprisals.

We look forward to further engaging with all relevant stakeholders, both here and in New York, including from civil society, the academic sector and the treaty bodies themselves.

I thank you.

**List of countries**

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| 1. Angola 2. Argentina 3. Australia 4. Austria 5. Bahamas 6. Belgium 7. Bulgaria 8. Canada 9. Chile 10. Costa Rica 11. Croatia 12. Cyprus 13. Czechia 14. Denmark 15. Estonia 16. Fiji 17. Finland 18. France 19. Georgia 20. Germany 21. Greece 22. Honduras 23. Hungary 24. Iceland 25. Ireland | 1. Israel 2. Italy 3. Latvia 4. Liechtenstein 5. Lithuania 6. Luxembourg 7. Malta 8. Mexico 9. Moldova 10. Monaco 11. Montenegro 12. Netherlands 13. New Zealand 14. Norway 15. Paraguay 16. Peru 17. Poland 18. Portugal 19. Romania 20. Slovenia 21. Sweden 22. Switzerland 23. Tunisia 24. Turkey 25. Ukraine 26. Uruguay |