

2 April 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Treaty Body Strengthening Consultation for States Parties to  
International Human Rights Treaties**

United Nations Secretary-General, Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Navi Pillay  
Under-Secretary-General Mr. Shaaban Shaaban  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me commence by thanking the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Navi Pillay, for her initiative calling on all stakeholders to reflect on how to strengthen the human rights treaty body system.

I would also like to thank Mrs. Pillay for inviting me to these consultations for States.

Today is the third occasion for Member States to engage on this issue, following earlier meetings in Sion in May 2011 and in Geneva in February 2012.

And today I am pleased we are meeting in New York, to engage the full membership in this process, especially the Member States without permanent representation in Geneva.

In June 2012, the High Commissioner will launch her report on treaty bodies, which will draw on the views expressed by the different stakeholders since 2009.

Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 66/254, adopted on 23 February 2012, this report will be presented to the Assembly.

I am confident that, in the Assembly, the report will receive the utmost attention and the consideration that it deserves.

Under resolution 66/254, the Membership also created the inter-governmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system.

I would highlight at this point that all stakeholders need to rationalize, adapt, and streamline this important UN machinery in the field of human rights, with the aim of improving its efficiency.

I have been asked to launch these negotiations on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the treaty body system.

As mandated by the resolution, I intend to proceed by appointing two co-facilitators to support the process in this regard, and I will announce this appointment in the near future.

The resolution also requested that the process commence no earlier than April 2012 and that I report on the deliberations and recommendations by the end of the 66th session of the General Assembly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was encouraged by statements made during the adoption of resolution 66/254, including those made by States who abstained and who noted that, regardless of their position, they intend to actively participate in the future inter-governmental process.

It is this spirit of cooperation that will move us forward, and I take it as an indication that the outcome of the negotiations will be one that all delegations will support.

My main objective will be to build unity for this process, which aims to strengthen the treaty bodies' capacity to assist States Parties to relevant human rights treaties in meeting their relevant obligations, including through timely presentation and consideration of periodic reports.

This process will also work to improve the impact of the human rights treaty bodies on rights-holders and duty-bearers at the national level, by strengthening their work, while fully respecting their independence.

The system must be kept independent and central to the promotion and protection of human rights.

There are different stakeholders to this process – Member States, States Parties to relevant human rights treaties, and human rights treaty bodies.

All stakeholders should be bound by the shared interest of making the best decisions for the treaty body system itself.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Resolution 66/254 requests me to work out separate informal arrangements, after consultation with Member States.

This would allow national human rights institutions, human rights treaty bodies and relevant non-governmental organizations to provide input and expertise.

At the adoption of resolution 66/254, several States affirmed the importance of ensuring the active participation of non-State stakeholders in the inter-governmental process.

Bearing in mind the inter-governmental nature of the General Assembly and of the process I will launch, as well as of the relevant provisions of resolution 66/254, I am fully aware of the important voice of representatives of civil society.

Finally, as requested by resolution 66/254, I will establish appropriate channels of communication with the President of the Human Rights Council regarding this process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As requested by paragraph 8 of resolution 66/254, I will report to the General Assembly by the end of this session on the deliberations and recommendations of the inter-governmental process, for further consideration by the Assembly.

In this regard, I rely on your full support as we work towards a clear and common cause.

Ensuring the protection and promotion of human rights is a mission we all share and it deserves our utmost attention.

Thank you.