



Treaty Body Questionnaire for States

The United Nations (UN) is undertaking a process to strengthen the work of the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies. One contribution to this is a Report from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled “Strengthening the United Nations treaty body system”, (available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/HRTD/index.htm>) in which she proposes a 'Comprehensive Reporting Calendar'. This proposal would have all States parties to any human rights treaty under which they are required to report on a fixed 5-year calendar with specific deadlines for production of the State report and appearance at the relevant Treaty Body. It is designed so that no State would report to more than two Treaty Bodies in any year.

Before reaching a decision on the merits of this proposal, Amnesty International, the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims and the Quaker UN Office, Geneva, believe that it would be useful to understand better how States currently prepare for and follow-up on reporting, and what changes the proposed Comprehensive Reporting Calendar would be likely to make to each part of this process.

We would, therefore, welcome your responses to the following five questions:

1. How do you currently prepare treaty body reports, eg when do you start, who is consulted inside and outside government, who does the drafting?
2. How do you currently engage in the dialogue with the Treaty Bodies on your reports, what preparation is made, who attends the session, what participation is there in capital during the session?
3. How do you currently follow up and implement the concluding observations?
4. How would each of these be affected by the High Commissioner's proposed Comprehensive Reporting Calendar, what would be the benefits and disadvantages that you foresee for you at each stage, and in particular as regards the process of preparing reports, the quality of information that can be provided, and implementation of concluding observations?
5. How would each of these be affected if you were to report on all the human rights treaties to which you are a party in a single consolidated block of time? What would be the advantages and disadvantages, in particular, as regards the process of preparing reports, the quality of information that can be provided, and implementation of concluding observations?

Please send your responses no later than 14 December 2012 to Tania Baldwin-Pask at Amnesty International – tbaldwin@amnesty.org.