



Statement by His Excellency Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič Permanent Observer of the Holy See
to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva
at the informal consultations on the process of review of the State of UN Human Rights Treaty
Body System

Simplify reporting procedures

Geneva, 28 August 2020

Excellencies,

The Delegation of the Holy See would like to thank H.E. Mr. Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland, and H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of Morocco, for convening this meeting.

The Holy See, recognizing its obligations as a State Party to three international human rights treaties, has participated actively in the State reporting process. Furthermore, the Holy See acknowledges the valuable contribution of each of the human rights treaty bodies in assisting State Parties to fulfill their relevant obligations.

The Simplified Reporting Procedure (OP1-2, A/RES/68/268) is a welcome measure to reduce the workload of State Parties and the treaty bodies. It is indispensable, however, to ensure that the list of issues does not contain questions or elements that exceed the scope of the treaty or go beyond the mandate of the treaty body concerned. Questions already answered by the State Party in writing should not be repeated orally during the interactive dialogue.

The possibility of submitting a Common Core document (OP3, A/RES/68/268) and to use combined reports to satisfy all the outstanding reporting obligations (OP32, A/RES/68/268) is a positive development. When a State Party submits a combined report, such a report should never be rejected by the treaty body.

In all matters regarding the reporting process, the specific provisions of the relevant treaty must be strictly observed. The Holy See recommends great caution regarding the “strengthening of synergies” between the various human rights bodies, as their nature and legal basis of each treaty differ greatly. Furthermore, the legal obligation of States differ greatly since each State has ratified a different set of human rights treaties. Therefore, the desire to promote synergy should not outweigh the necessity to respect the uniqueness of each legal regime nor lead to the analogous interpretations in the provisions of the treaties.

Thank you, Excellencies.