

EUROPEAN UNION

Human Rights Council  
6<sup>th</sup> session  
(Geneva, 10-28 September 2007)

GENERAL COMMENT on the draft decision "Follow-up to Human Rights  
Council resolution 5/1" (L. 24)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union Member States that are members of the Human Rights Council.

The European Union would like to express its satisfaction for the fact that this Council was able to finish the pending Institutional Building questions in September, goal that we have committed ourselves to achieve in June. We thank you, Mr. President, as well as H.E.s Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki and Ambassador Alicia Martin, for having facilitated these negotiations.

By setting the UPR General Guidelines, selecting the order of the review and deciding on a consensual calendar, we have now all the tools to start the UPR - a mechanism aimed at enhancing the implementation by all States of its human rights obligations and commitments - in a solid and reliable basis, and bring with it an added value to the UN Human Rights system. The EU strongly believes that a universal, non-selective, comprehensive and effective review of the human rights situation in all countries will enhance the overall system of promotion and protection of human rights.

By defining the Technical and Objective Requirements for the Submission of Candidatures to the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, as a complement to the criteria already established in Resolution 5/1, the Council will also be able to put this new organ in place as soon as possible. We are looking forward to the experts' election at the next session of the Council. Applying the established requirements, and namely ensuring that experts are truly independent and highly qualified, will be a common responsibility of all of us, as proponents of the candidates and/or as electors.

Regarding the criteria for Special Procedures' mandate-holders, we have always stressed the need to have a Public List composed of independent, human-rights oriented and highly qualified experts. In that sense, the EU would have preferred that the Council had decided on more demanding criteria and objective indications on how to apply them. We are confident that the OHCHR and the Consultative Group, when applying the requirements already established in Resolution 5/1 and the complementary ones that we decided today, will ensure that candidates to be included in the Public List are truly independent and have excellent and proven expertise. The statistics

regarding qualifications and years of experience of previous and present Special Rapporteurs may serve as a good and objective indicator that can be used to this end.

This explanation of position has been agreed by the European Union as a whole.

Thank you, Mr. President.