

EU Intervention on Institution-Building (15.03.07 morning)

Mr. President,

As we will have the opportunity to discuss the facilitator's non-papers in detail during the coming week, let me limit myself to some rather general remarks today.

Resolution 60/251 clearly states our common "commitment to strengthen the UN human rights machinery, with the aim of ensuring the effective enjoyment by all of all human rights" (PP12).

The Council must be able to shoulder its comprehensive mandate to address the full range of human rights questions. We need therefore to equip the Council with all necessary tools and mechanisms. At the end of the day, when we finally combine the elements which are discussed separately in the working groups, the result must be a credible and effective institution.

Let me now turn to two cross-cutting issues of the institution-building process:

1. Experts

Experts are an essential part of the UN-Human Rights machinery. We need to ensure that we will be supported in our deliberations in the Council by experts of the highest qualification and independence.

2. Civil society

NGOs as well as National Human Rights institutions can provide valuable insight. They can also be helpful partners for implementation and follow-up. We are well advised to include them in the different procedures of the Council.

Mr. President,

We all agree that the UPR is a key new element of the Council. I will therefore shortly comment on this one specific issue.

Universal Periodic Review

The UPR should apply the same standards to all countries and be based on the abundance of information available within the UN system. Expert involvement in assessing this wealth of information is essential to make the process workable.

The EU favours a “tailor-made outcome” that leads to realistic and tangible improvements on the ground. Effective co-operation with the country concerned will be needed to assure such an outcome. At the same time, the UPR should be able to take a strong stand in cases of non-cooperation and not accept a ‘veto’ of the country under review.

Let me conclude by thanking you, Mr. President, and the six facilitators for your able leadership and constant efforts to advance our deliberations on the institution-building process. *We should intensify our efforts over the coming weeks and months, so that we can reach a consensual outcome within the available time.*