

Statement by Ambassador Dr. Gunter Pleuger at the Informal consultation of the plenary of the General Assembly on the Human Rights Council

Mr President,

In addition to the contribution by the EU presidency to our debate, which Germany fully supports, I would like to come back to a particularly important feature of a future Human Rights Council, namely its nature as a standing body.

My delegation is convinced that the standing nature of the Council is the one element that will make the difference to the CHR. There are many other very important elements, but it will be the ability of the Council to be seized of human rights situations when they arise that will make the crucial difference in comparison to the Commission on Human Rights. Only a standing body would give credibility to our common understanding reached at the September World Summit that human rights, together with development and peace and security constitute the three pillars of the United Nations.

A standing Human Rights Council could help a lot towards addressing a concern voiced by a number of our friends and partners from different groups, for instance by Namibia on behalf of the African Group: A Commission of Human Rights, meeting for six weeks in spring each year, will always be faced with a difficult decision to address situations that are perceived as the most urgent at the time within a short time frame. This kind of time pressure makes the selection of human rights situations to be dealt with more vulnerable to political considerations. A Council, however, which meets frequently throughout the year will be much less prone to be selective in its dealings with human rights situations and it would be able to conduct a constant dialogue with member States. Only a standing body would be able to fulfil the need for fair and impartial scrutiny free of political considerations. And only a standing body will be able to deliver on universal scrutiny, which the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights have rightly described as an important tool to address selectivity and politicisation.

Thank you, Mr President

http://www.germanyinfo.org/UN/archive/speeches/2005/sp_10_11_05.html?PHPSESSID=5586a2898e8a63d9c839633ac7417af8