**Submission from Singapore to the questionnaire in relation to**

**General Assembly Resolution 68/268 on “Strengthening and Enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system”**

In response to the Questionnaire in relation to General Assembly resolution 68/268 for inputs on the upcoming review of the state of the human rights treaty body system mandated by General Assembly Resolution 68/268 in 2020, Singapore submits the following proposals:

1. Some UN human rights mechanisms such as the Special Procedures Mandate Holders (SPMHs) are guided by a Code of Conduct in the conduct of their work. There is currently no equivalent guidance for treaty body members. We propose establishing a common code of conduct for treaty body members to build trust with States Parties, enhance the effectiveness of the treaty body system, set out common practices and define standards of professional conduct and ethical behaviour in discharging their duties. The code of conduct should be negotiated and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, in consultation with the Chairs of the treaty bodies.
2. As recommended by Operative Paragraph 7 of General Assembly Resolution 68/268, the treaty bodies should make more efficient and effective use of the meetings of States Parties by proposing and organising discussions on matters related to the implementation of each treaty.
3. A State Party’s review should serve as a platform for a constructive exchange of views and good practices in order to be able to further the practical realisation of human rights. Treaty body members should be open to hearing the innovative and practical ways that a State Party has adopted to realise human rights within their specific circumstances, and lessen calls for a one-size-fits-allapproach or advocate for the adoption of an ideological approach to how human rights should be realised. Issues that are extraneous or irrelevant to the treaty should not be raised during the review. In a similar vein, questions posed to States Parties under review should be clearly expressed and targeted at specific treaty obligations (with express reference to the relevant article of the treaty). To facilitate the review, treaty bodies should also provide States Parties with a list of questions up to 48 hours prior to the dialogue to avoid duplication of questions and to allow States Parties the best opportunity to provide detailed and in-depth answers.
4. The treaty bodies should adhere to their respective mandates as set out in the relevant treaties and not impose extraneous obligations on States Parties. States Parties should not be assessed on the basis of obligations contained in treaties that they have not ratified.
5. The treaty bodies should conduct their work in an independent, impartial, credible and objective manner, and engage all States Parties in constructive dialogue to facilitate the realisation of their treaty obligations.
6. Treaty bodies should judiciously verify information provided by stakeholders prior to citing or otherwise utilising such information during a State Party’s review. A review should be based on facts and substantial grounds, and not based on allegations and unverified information.

1. The treaty bodies should place greater emphasis on applying their expertise and experience to provide more targeted and practical recommendations and suggestions to assist States Parties to realise their treaty obligations.
2. The clustering or consolidating of all reviews under different treaty bodies should be avoided. The number of treaties each State is party to varies, and this would lead to inconsistencies in the way each State is being reviewed.
3. There is no justifiable basis for introducing new mechanisms to screen or assess candidates running for treaty body elections. The nomination and election of treaty body members remains the sovereign prerogative of member states. Such mechanisms would also be superfluous given that all candidates are nominated publicly by States Parties, who are able to seek information and exercise their judgment on the suitability of the candidates. Moreover, a “screening” body could inadvertently result in greater discrimination against candidates from certain geographical groups.

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