



**Joint Declaration between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States through the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights**

THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, hereinafter referred to as "OHCHR" on the one part, and THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, hereinafter referred to as "IACHR", hereinafter together referred to as "the Parties",

*Recalling* United Nations General Assembly resolution 32/127 of 16 December 1977 and subsequent resolutions concerning regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights, the latest being resolution 63/170 of 18 December 2008, in which the General Assembly welcomes the growing exchanges between the United Nations and regional organizations and institutions, noting with interest in this regard the strengthening of the cooperation between OHCHR, IACHR and the Organization of American States (OAS),

*Recalling* United Nations Human Rights Council Resolutions 6/20, 12/15, 18/14 and 24/19 entitled "Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights" which reaffirm the fact that regional arrangements play an important role in promoting and protecting human rights and should reinforce universal human rights standards, as contained in international human rights instruments, and OAS General Assembly Resolution AG/Res. 57 (I-0/71) entitled "Standards on cooperative relations between the Organization of American States and the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and other national and international organizations",

*In view of* the Declaration of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States on 13 February 2013, in which he noted that the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations was not only a wish but a necessity, and recognized the important synergies between regional human rights bodies and United Nations human rights mechanisms, including OHCHR,

*Taking into account* the conclusions and recommendations of the workshops on cooperation between the United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms held in Geneva in 2010, 2012 and 2014, as well as the regional consultations for the Americas on enhancing cooperation between United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms, held in Washington DC in 2009 and 2011, which recognize the need to continue strengthening and systematizing growing collaboration between the United Nations and the Organization of American States human rights bodies,

Have reached the following understanding:

## **I. Objective**

The Objective of this Declaration is to define a general framework for enhancing the cooperation between the Parties in the areas of promotion and protection of human rights.

## **II. Consultation and participation**

1. The Parties shall designate Contact Points within each one for the co-ordination of the implementation of this Declaration and for institutional contacts with the other Party.

2. Existing consultations between OHCHR and IACHR shall continue on a regular basis. The Parties will also explore, when possible, the holding of joint annual meetings, held on a rotational basis between Geneva and Washington DC, including with Special Procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council.
3. Ad-hoc consultations on issues of common interest shall be organised, as necessary, in Geneva or Washington DC, or on the margins of multilateral conferences or other events.
4. Subject to the applicable regulations and procedures in force, the Parties shall consider supporting each other's initiatives in situations where the respective mandate and expertise allow it.
5. Within the framework of the Objective of this Declaration, and upon a request, the Parties shall facilitate participation of representatives of the other Party, subject to regulations and procedures in force in each organisation, in meetings of their respective bodies, such as expert consultations preceding thematic reports or general studies, peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, identification of thematic areas of collaboration, participation in sessions of the IACHR, among others.

### **III. Exchange of information**

6. The Parties shall take measures to promote a proactive exchange of information and documentation, at headquarters level and in the field, on relevant human rights matters, subject to arrangements that may be required to preserve the confidential or restricted nature of certain information and documents.
7. The Contact Points shall facilitate, where necessary, the internal circulation of requests and the transmission of the information required.

### **IV. Collaboration regarding respective mechanisms and standard-setting**

8. When appropriate, the exchange of information shall also pertain to the international human rights mechanisms, including the human rights treaty monitoring bodies, the Special Procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review, as well as to the mechanisms of IACHR. Such information may include dates of sessions and missions, deadlines for the submission of information, recommendations, jurisprudence, and co-operation activities in the field, including but not limited to jurisprudence and recommendations from IACHR precautionary measures, petitions and cases, thematic and country reports and requests for information.
9. The Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that human rights commitments, as well as recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms and of IACHR are taken into account in each other's work and that, where appropriate, cross-references to such instruments and recommendations are made in reports and action plans.

### **V. Cooperation**

10. The Parties may undertake to carry out joint activities, including monitoring and training activities, with a view to achieving their common objectives, on the basis of

modalities to be jointly agreed as appropriate. Such modalities may include joint press releases or joint public statements; possible joint country visits and collaboration in planning and organizing aforementioned visits. Such modalities shall specify the type of participation in such joint activities as well as financial implications, if any, for each of the Parties.

11. The Parties shall establish a co-operation mechanism in accordance with the methodology agreed by the Parties related to the implementation of recommendations issued by human rights treaty bodies, Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review, as well as IACHR.
12. The Parties shall co-operate, when appropriate, in joint advocacy action regarding issues of mutual concern, vis-à-vis OAS member States, within the OAS and the UN bodies.
13. The Parties shall co-operate, when appropriate, in assisting governments of OAS member States in the implementation of recommendations of international human rights mechanisms, including human rights treaty bodies, Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, and the Universal Periodic Review, and of IACHR recommendations when appropriate, in partnership with their field presences, other UN and regional organisations' presence at the national level, as well as national human rights institutions and civil society organisations.
14. The Parties shall also co-operate, when appropriate, in promoting thematic cooperation on priority issues such as human rights in development and the economic sphere; enhancing equality and countering discrimination; widening the democratic space; combating impunity and strengthening accountability and the rule of law; early warning and protection of human rights in situations of conflict, violence and insecurity. The Parties shall in particular exchange information when developing their respective activities and programmes of action in the field, including, wherever appropriate, information on internal rules, procedures and administrative modalities. Where appropriate, they shall seek to define common objectives, commonly agreed procedures as well as joint or coordinated activities.
15. The Parties shall work with and encourage civil society organisations, national human rights institutions and other human rights mechanisms to enhance cooperation with the two Parties.

## **VI. General and final provisions**

16. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as preventing the Parties from pursuing their respective activities in accordance with their mandates, regulations and procedures.
17. Each Party shall respectively bear the costs and expenses that the application of this Declaration entails. Common costs and financial implications, if any, resulting, in particular, from joint activities, advocacy, assistance or promotion, organised by the Parties, will be the subject of specific agreements.
18. The implementation of this Declaration shall be discussed on the occasion of the periodic OHCHR/IACHR meetings, with a view to revising it if necessary.


Done in Washington DC, on 19 November 2014.

For OHCHR

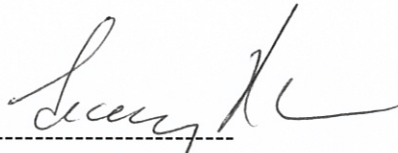


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