



Wilton Park



Conference report

**Addressing implementation gaps:
improving cooperation between global and regional
human rights mechanisms**

Thursday 23 – Saturday 25 January 2014 | WP1291

In association with:



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Introduction

Organised in association with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, this conference aimed to find ways to improve implementation of human rights at the national level by optimising cooperation between global and regional human rights mechanisms. Significant attention was paid to Europe, particularly in light of the opportunities presented by Switzerland's chairmanship of the OSCE. How the various mechanisms interact with national human rights institutions and civil society organizations was also an essential part of the picture. A wide range of experts from all regions and institutions – governments, intergovernmental organisations, national human rights institutions and NGOs – took part. Drawing on their experience, the conference took stock of existing cooperation, identified best practice and lessons learned, and explored possible new approaches.

Key conclusions/recommendations

- For the purpose of securing better implementation, “overlap” in the work of different organisations is not per se a bad thing. Mutual reinforcement can lead to greater effectiveness.
- Cooperation and coordination is already taking place on many levels, but can be strengthened further.
- Cooperation need not be formalized; practice is what matters. But cooperation must be goal-oriented.
- Recognition of the value of cross-organisational cooperation should be built into staff incentive structures, especially where field operations are concerned.
- Effective cooperation is not without cost. Human rights must be mainstreamed into budgetary and policy decision-making.
- The comparative advantages of different institutions and actors should be evaluated, and securing complementarity made a focus for attention.
- Global and regional mechanisms should systematically cross-reference their jurisprudence.
- An international clearing house might usefully be created, containing all regional and international standards for decision-makers.
- All recommendations and decisions of global and regional human rights mechanisms for individual countries should be compiled in a comprehensive national mapping exercise.
- A national human rights database on the situation in a country could be usefully developed.
- There should be one National Human Rights Action Plan in each country, incorporating the decisions of international and regional mechanisms and to whose enforcement the

international community should contribute.

- More joint strategic planning is needed, particularly at the regional level.
- There needs to be better coordination within and between governments.
- The private sector, international financial institutions and the donor community must also be targeted for coordination.
- Staff exchanges between global and regional organisations as well as between regional organisations should be promoted and facilitated.

Challenges and opportunities in securing better implementation of human rights

1. Recent years have seen an increased demand for human rights and an increased “supply” in terms of standards and providers - international, regional and national - yet with no apparent, corresponding, higher level of protection. While States bear primary responsibility to provide human rights protection, international organisations also have a role to play.
2. Current global economic constraints threaten human rights - civil, political, economic, social and cultural - like all other spheres of activity. They also create further human rights problems (human trafficking just one example). States increasingly see human rights as a burden rather than a responsibility. This becomes more evident as leaders lose sight of why the UN and its standards were developed. Still, States continue to create new mandates, forcefully making the case but failing to back this up with the necessary resources. Yet multilateral human rights work remains the least expensive area of foreign policy.
3. While some believe that greater coordination between organisations leads to efficiency savings, others more readily admit that effective cooperation requires an input of time and money. In this context, it is especially important that human rights are mainstreamed into budgetary and policy decision-making. International organisations need appropriate financing, while operational tools must be found to save money.
4. Lack of political will on the part of States lies at the root of non-implementation.
5. Confronting human rights in a democracy poses a particular problem, especially when democracy has been equated with the holding of free elections. A number of people currently in power in new democracies came out of the struggle against dictatorship and now assume there are no further human rights violations. They may look for advice and training, but do not countenance complaints against their government. Human rights can be perceived as an obstacle to the vision of a charismatic leader. What is needed is a context of human rights, tolerance, space for civil society, freedom of expression and inclusion.
6. One great setback in recent years has been the rise of so-called “realism” vs human rights in the foreign policy of the USA and others, and the notion that security may require departure from universal standards. Consistent voices making these arguments, and indicating that there will be no consequences, have a ripple effect. There needs to be a strong push back in defence of human rights, with arguments coming also from security experts. In the same context, the enforceability of treaty obligations is under attack in a number of States. A number of governments who previously contributed most to protection at international level are beginning to undermine their own project and send out a quite different discourse to the rest of the world.
7. In the above circumstances, overlap in the work of different organisations is not necessarily a bad thing.

Existing cooperation and coordination: strengths and weaknesses

8. As requested by the Human Rights Council (HRC), the Office of the High

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has in recent years instituted periodic consultations between the UN and regional human rights systems to strengthen existing links and identify new approaches for cooperation. The latest meeting was in December 2012, and included a first meeting of focal points for cooperation between UN and regional human rights mechanisms. Both meetings produced a number of conclusions and recommendations which are felt to be a very useful framework.¹

9. UN Human Rights Council Special Procedures Mandate Holders in particular have the flexibility to make the most of cooperation with others, including pre-mission discussions with those on the ground, practical follow-up at country level and at the HRC, and engaging with corresponding special procedures within the regional systems. It is important that the UN system not present itself as “above” others. It is often easier for mandate holders from the region to take a leading role and build confidence.
10. The Addis Ababa Road Map of the UN HRC Special Procedures Mandate Holders and the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights, providing for joint initiatives and institutional exchange of information, serves as one model for cooperation between global and regional bodies. In this case, a formal, written arrangement has proved most helpful.
11. International and regional organisations can learn from each other’s strengths. The establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) led Africa to look to reform the African Court on Human and People’s Rights. Though voluntary, an African peer review mechanism was in place before the UN HRC’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR); then the UPR galvanized attention to issues of human rights in all countries.
12. Tensions between the regional and universal systems do exist, however. This is currently highly evident in relation to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the issue of LGBT. When mass atrocities have been committed after the failure of human rights mechanisms, recourse is had to international justice. International actors must take care in these cases to listen to regional voices so they have the necessary foresight to avoid damaging consequences on the ground – such as suffered by civil society in Darfur on the indictment of President Bashir. The demands of victims must be a starting point. The rejection of amnesty clauses in peace agreements serves as one positive, concrete example of cooperation in the interest of victims. Strengthening national mechanisms could in the long run serve to preclude the need for international intervention.
13. The Inter-American system also provides interesting examples of working in coordination: horizontally, with other regional organisations, as well as vertically, with UN organisms, and through joint initiatives and, perhaps more significantly, the development of complementary strategies. All relevant actors need to be involved in building a strategic agenda – the High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR) together with the HRC, and the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) as well as its human rights instances. This strategic aspect can be strengthened further.
14. Non-adherence to regional conventions presents a major challenge in all regions. In such a context, the universal standards and institutions, including the voice of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, have even greater value. As Venezuela denounced the Inter-American system, for example, the UN’s message was very important.
15. It is critical that all develop standards that are equal to if not better than those already existing, whether in new areas of focus, such as the environment, indigenous people, LGBT, freedom of information in the technological era, or old problems of justice, public security, migration. Where a solid UN text exists, little purpose is served drafting a new regional document.
16. Mutual reinforcement and support is key for securing effective implementation at the national level: the example was given of a key UPR recommendation to the Mexican

Government reinforced by a decision of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

17. The various institutions in Europe dealing with human rights have different, complementary approaches, transregional and regional, political and legal, with varying degrees of flexibility and enforceability; they can be mutually reinforcing, and increasingly need to be. It is judged unlikely that increased resources will be forthcoming, and more synergies will be necessary.
18. Cooperation between the Council of Europe and UN goes back to 1951, with further agreements concluded since with almost all relevant bodies. While they may set the tone, regular exchanges between the highest officials and exchanges of views between decision-making bodies do not adequately convey the reality. Daily desk to desk exchanges are of greatest practical effect if the time can be set aside for them. With the UN and the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), periodic exchanges on thematic issues are organised and new areas explored.
19. The work of the different organisations is mutually reinforcing, helping to concentrate resources. The CoE's Committee of Ministers may call for the dissemination of UN standards rather than developing new standards – for example as concerns human rights and business. In the early days of the UPR process, the CoE tended to contribute too much paper. It has now changed its approach, in order to have its information make it through more easily to the level of recommendations. The exchange of documents, and conduct of joint visits can alleviate monitoring fatigue. For cooperation in the field, exchange of information in programming phases is important.
20. The CoE's Commissioner for Human Rights, working independently, has many of his own contacts throughout the UN and other institutions. He prepares his visits in cooperation with national human rights institutions (NHRIs), and UN special procedures mandate holders.
21. Tackling one of the most critical issues in human rights, especially in Europe, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) provides a good model for monitoring bodies. Part of its strength lies in the diverse backgrounds of its members and its proactive approach. Cooperation with others is horizontal and vertical, including with member States. It can always be made more efficient and effective, including with other CoE institutions, such as the Court.
22. CoE cooperation with the FRA is an interesting success story, despite initial concern on the establishment of the latter. FRA's findings in fact are most helpful to monitoring bodies.
23. With a view to enhancing implementation at the national level, the FRA cooperates closely with NHRIs. Globally, the FRA interacts with the UN and OHCHR – for example most recently, on indicators and a human rights toolkit for public officials. At regional level, it works with the CoE on specific topics, and common projects are developed with the OSCE and CoE, making the best use of their complementarity.
24. As ratification of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) by the European Union is eagerly awaited, the standards of the CoE are almost always the starting point for FRA's analyses. The FRA collects reliable data from across EU member States and allows for an informed view of how CoE standards are given effect in EU countries. The FRA also views this work as complementing that of the UN treaty bodies; discussions are continuing as to how its data can be most useful to the UPR process.
25. The specificities of the OSCE lie in its nature as a security organisation, wherein human security is as important as political and military; it is a political organisation, with institutions to act on substance on the ground (of its 2,800 staff, 2,000 are in the field); it has mechanisms to monitor and respond to deficits through peer review; and it provides a public arena for all interested stakeholders. Its closeness to the ground means it has capacities to act quickly and it possesses expertise in certain areas, including election and trial observations. It has a strong cooperative governance and

open access for civil society actors.

26. For the OSCE, three key goals emerge: effectiveness (impact on the ground); efficiency (with scarcer resources) and accountability (defining responsibilities). As an essential corollary, there also need to be synergies between and inside governments.
27. Strong cooperation is an integral part of the mandate of the OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media, at global and regional level. It is not a matter of duplication, but strength in speaking together – for example, in joint statements with the CoE's Commissioner for Human Rights. It would be helpful to see more joint voices from governments.
28. The suggestion has been made that (some of) the UN treaty bodies need not concern themselves with Europe as it is already adequately covered by regional instances. Such an approach risks damaging the principle of universality. In Europe, too, challenges to the protection system are being seen, including nationalistic, populist challenges to human rights standards; these call for concern from the global mechanisms.
29. Cross-regional organisations, such as the Commonwealth, or the Organisation de la Francophonie, can also sometimes play a helpful role, as can cooperation at local and cities level. Sub-regional cooperation can be of great value, as demonstrated by NHRIs in the Balkans and in parts of Africa. Especially when they do not have the resources to participate in international networks, NHRIs have seen the value in working together with neighbouring colleagues to develop a strategy for the region, and possibly institutions in the area to support their work.
30. Coordination within governments in the different IGOs is equally needed. Government representatives may act one way in one international/regional organisation and another elsewhere. It is important that government voices be consistent wherever human rights are discussed. Similarly, governments coming together to speak out on human rights issues in a particular country can be a powerful tool.
31. In order to be mutually reinforcing, organisations must have harmonious standards and keep in close contact. Institutions giving the same message can be most effective. But without the exchange of findings, different conclusions may be reached and any effectiveness jeopardized. (The example of the observation of elections in Azerbaijan was cited.) Many reports are prepared, but materials are not made generally available. Currently, there are only ad hoc attempts to check that any provisional measure to be adopted is in compliance with regional and international standards. One proposal would be for a clearing house to be created containing all such information relevant for decision-making.
32. It is important too for the universal organisations to engage at the regional and local level. All can learn from each other and support the other if necessary. Regional and local fora can address situations on a more regular basis than can the universal and often may have a greater ease of access and acceptance. Some constraints to cooperation exist in relation to confidential dialogue with member States, and some difficulties with regard to practical recommendations made in situ without the chance to confer. Special attention has to be paid to such challenges.

Implementation at national level

33. It is the duty of states to promote and protect human rights. They must first look to the legal framework and harmonize with international standards (including the jurisprudence of international courts and committees), spread awareness of these standards and then ensure implementation nationally.
34. The judgments and decisions of international and regional human rights instances and their execution are of primary importance. States should see that, with proper implementation, cases could be drastically reduced insofar as many are systemic

complaints. One approach is to ensure that decisions and recommendations of international and regional human rights bodies are incorporated in National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs). The international community in a country should collectively contribute to the enforcement of the NHRAP.

35. The creation of a national human rights database on the human rights situation in the country could be of great benefit to all and help secure greater impact.
36. While human rights awareness has grown generally, individuals at the national level still do not have a clear understanding of existing standards. Responsibility for promoting human rights awareness is often given to NHRIs by their respective parliaments, though without corresponding resources. NHRIs might have the channels of communication necessary, but are often so focused on protection, it is difficult for them to fulfil their mandate in other respects. Alliances need to be forged at local level in order to ensure follow-up to decisions and judgments. However, few NHRIs have this on their agenda. Moreover, while NHRIs are often called upon, including by the government, to provide a report for the UN's UPR mechanism, again because of competing priorities, they are not able to use all the opportunities afforded them to participate in the deliberations of the UN Human Rights Council.
37. The UN's approach to and understanding of the role of NHRIs has greatly improved, including relations with the human rights treaty bodies. There still remain the challenges associated with language barriers and the complexity of UN rules. Most international and regional organisations need more meaningful outreach programmes. Social media can be explored to a much greater depth. Manuals – for example on communication between NHRIs and regional and international organisations - might be one way to approach this, but face to face discussions generally are more effective and meetings should be regularly organised, preferably in the region.
38. Human rights NGOs, as well as NHRIs, play an especially important role at national level, where they can bring international standards to bear. Human rights defenders are essential to the work of international mechanisms, and international and regional organisations should in turn work to defend them.
39. Recognising that the successful functioning of human rights mechanisms depends on active, independent NGOs, international and regional organizations quite often invite NGOs to meetings to assist them in their work, but do not help with the funding of such participation, leaving the NGO with hard choices about priorities. Coordination costs money.
40. Compounding this problem, large, international human rights NGOs are opening more local offices, encroaching on the funding and human resources for local groups. Meanwhile, support is being given to local NGOs to become more global. The effect of these moves on local capacity should be carefully watched. At the same time, according to one NGO, some 30 to 40 governments have now adopted restrictive legislation on foreign funding of NGOs, effectively stifling them. Human rights also mean empowering local non-State actors. But if these trends continue, few local implementing partners will remain.
41. Funding agencies have a special responsibility and other donors should connect with them, through the US-based International Human Rights Foundation (IHRF) Network (on whose website global funding is tracked) or the European Funders Network, to devise appropriate strategies. New technology groups and human rights groups meeting together (in California) may be able to help resolve some of the challenges in this area.
42. The private sector plays an increasingly important role at national level. A number of texts and initiatives have been developed on the role of businesses in human rights and of host States. Expectations of these companies, and the business value of good practice have increased. International organisations could do more to spread awareness of the Ruggie principles² and to confront companies systematically violating

human rights.

43. In 2015, when the ASEAN economic community will become fully operational, Thai businesses will be most active in going to other countries. The Thai National Human Rights Commission decided to look at the conduct of Thai industrialists in countries such as Myanmar and Cambodia, with particular regard to issues of non-discrimination in pay and prevention of forced relocations.
44. In a number of situations, in particular those where political will seems slow to emerge, the International Financial Institutions may have greatest leverage. The World Bank has been involved in initiatives on media pluralism as a commercial venture and has conducted joint initiatives with the Open Society Institute in the context of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative³, including in Tajikistan. More ways should be found to ensure that human rights are on the agenda of such institutions.

Strengthening global, regional and national cooperation

Field offices:

45. Field Offices of international and regional organisations have an important role to play especially when there is no NHRI in the country. From the perspective of national/local actors, it sometimes seems that there are too many international and regional organisations in the picture, with a lack of clarity as to the relationship between them. In some cases they do not speak with the same voice. Where there is no specific human rights presence, the priority once accorded to human rights in a country can be lost.
46. Better coordination is clearly important for greater impact on the ground, so why should it be so difficult in practice? One major factor may be found in the competition for resources. This requires organisations to be visible, whereas cooperation makes them less visible. The donor community should evaluate carefully the usefulness of plans on the ground.
47. There is now a trend among OSCE Participating States to question field missions, hitherto considered of great importance and value for the organisation. Few States are willing to host them, perceiving them as attaching stigma, rather than being a mark of distinction for a State in transition. Staffing capacity has also become an issue, as the OSCE missions do not offer so attractive a prospect as in the past. A serious rethink would look at defining more precisely the goals of field presences and their duration, with entry and exit strategies. In the meantime, the most powerful tool of governments to control the work of the OSCE lies with the budget.
48. One positive example of working cooperatively at field level concerned a strategic partnership between the OSCE and the Government of Tajikistan. This involved meeting regularly, discussing shared priorities, and regular internal reporting to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It included engagement with multiple stakeholders, from the Office of the President to NGOs. Just as important as the initiatives agreed to and taken, was the elaborate process of dialogue with both the State and NGOs which the regional organisation was able to facilitate and listen to. A State is a more complex notion than just the government, embracing the judiciary, and so on. This interconnectedness and complexity must be taken into account. Strenuous efforts must be made to demystify and build trust in actors, provide immediate feedback and test limits. (This of course does not work in the same way in the context of emergencies and armed actions.)
49. There is a hunger in Central Asia for information and knowledge. Local independent media cover the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Lawyers are keen to use complaints procedures. Seeing Russia fail to implement decisions of the Human Rights Committee presents a difficult challenge. Renewed efforts are required to reinforce the binding nature of international norms. Generating political will is key.
50. The convergence of a number of different approaches in a country can be most productive. For example: within the same timeframe, the UN Special Rapporteur on

Torture paid a visit, the State party report to the Committee against Torture was prepared, the human rights dialogue with the EU touched on the prevention of torture, UK parliamentarians visited and OSCE and EU embassies started working on different related projects. All pooled their efforts and worked with local NGOs to assist the Government of Tajikistan to adopt a National Action Plan on Torture and amend the national law accordingly.

51. Those on the ground, including UN Country Teams, are best placed to give advice and guidance. Field presences collect and provide information about what is going on in, for example, judicial reform or Internally Displaced Persons. Without field presences, their knowledge and understanding, the UN Special Procedures and any other visiting missions could not hope to be so effective.
52. States too should use country visits to raise key issues, and not leave international organisations – of which they are members – alone to meet the challenges.
53. In some cases, an incentive structure is lacking. Coordination is not an end in itself. The impetus for better cooperation should come from the acting chairs/heads of the respective organisations. Human rights presences spanning different organisations should be encouraged and facilitated, in integrated missions. The quality of leadership – the Resident Coordinator in the UN context – should be aware of and responsive to and accountable on human rights.
54. Long term engagement, rather than quick gains, is necessary for sustainability. Field presences with national staff contribute to this sustainability.

Standard setting:

55. At this point, standard setting may involve updating existing standards as well as developing new ones. The expectations of the new generation of activists need to be addressed. Generally, there is a need to come together to reanimate the human rights discourse, gathering people of different backgrounds and disciplines, and broadening the set of professionals involved in the process.
56. Where there are risks of lower standards being developed at regional level, this should not result in out of hand rejection, undermining the regional organisation, but rather engagement and constructive efforts to find a way forward. In some cases regional standards come first and can be of benefit to the global institutions, for example in the area of women's rights (trafficking and violence against women).
57. Regional and international bodies should be encouraged to refer to one another's standards and jurisprudence. There still remains a need to educate people in what standards are, in particular training for staff in intergovernmental organisations. NGOs need to be given greater support in this area.
58. When any new standards are developed, their implementation requires monitoring.

Monitoring:

59. The basic purpose of monitoring is data collection with a view to deterrence and encouraging better implementation. The monitoring mandate must be clear and the monitor accountable, and there has to be a readiness to cooperate with monitoring bodies. On the other side, there is reporting fatigue, a lack of capacity and understanding in government offices. The length between monitoring and outputs can be problematic. More significantly, a failure to comply by "model" States can result in little expectation of others.
60. There is concern about the proliferation of UN human rights mandates and the institution's ability to support them. Any further resolutions creating new mandates must be accompanied by the necessary resources.
61. On the positive side, some good practices have been developed, such as the live screening of the UPR process; systematic consultation with stakeholders in framework

reporting, which itself builds capacity; and lists of questions for examination of reports by the UN treaty bodies. The UPR process itself is useful for nascent mechanisms. It has presented unique opportunities within States – for example, the USA – to educate parts of government outside of those dealing with foreign policy and allow domestic groups to organise in an unprecedented way.

62. With the current competition for resources, mechanisms need to be efficient and innovative, have a dynamic relationship with each other, as well as with NHRIs and civil society. The UN's Special Procedures also need to participate and cooperate, for example, sharing calendars and aims of visits. To be effective, this requires discipline also on the part of receiving States.

Implementation:

63. All recommendations and decisions of global and regional human rights mechanisms and bodies for each country should be compiled in a comprehensive mapping exercise⁴. This mapping could serve as the basis for pragmatic collaboration at field level and make it possible for governments, especially donors, to speak with a more consistent voice. It would allow for a common understanding of what needs to be done and a better division of labour based on organisational strengths. Such a mapping exercise could also serve as a basis for the development of a comprehensive national human rights action plan. It could also contribute to a better division of labour across political bodies and secretariats in which carrots and sticks would be used by those best placed to use them in encouraging implementation.
64. A considerable amount of valuable cooperation between global and regional organisations takes place in a pragmatic way at the field level. While framework agreements for inter-regional cooperation could be useful, many do not consider such agreements essential for effective cooperation. Much can be done to establish close working relationships without a formal arrangement. In some instances it might be politically impossible to establish such agreements. Recognition of the value of cross-organisation cooperation should be built into the incentive structures for staff of organisational secretariats, particularly in field operations.
65. More should be done to promote staff exchanges between global and regional organisations as well as between regional organisations. Such exchanges would help to transfer knowledge across organisations, promote better understanding of opportunities for cooperation and contribute to the development of professional relationships that facilitate such cooperation.
66. Political will must be sustained or stimulated for implementation; it cannot be taken for granted. Similarly, the commitment to human rights implementation by an IGO presence cannot be taken for granted. Information about implementation from the field level and the outputs of expert mechanisms must be addressed by the relevant political organs with the aim of generating political will where that is required. At the end of the day, countries must be held to account for implementation of their human rights obligations and commitments, and measures must be taken to ensure that this accounting takes place.⁵
67. Good practices in cooperation should be more regularly identified, discussed and shared. It is important to identify what has worked well and understand why, so that positive lessons can be applied in other situations. This would include identifying what has worked well in cooperation with local partners.

Technical assistance:

68. A National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP), formulated through popular participation, constitutes important leverage and is measurable, as compared with rather top-down, donor-driven agendas. It helps guard against risk of pushbacks. Technical assistance and capacity building should be linked with findings/recommendations from international procedures. Donors and local activists

can buy into this.

69. Donor accountability is important, whether to parliament or others. Public/private partnerships can be explored for targeted capacity building, particularly where relationships with donors and reporting have become overly burdensome.
70. A register of persons trained should be maintained and shared with others to promote sustainability and avoid problems associated with turnover.

Priorities:

71. Foremost among the recommendations emerging from the December 2012 Human Rights Council-sponsored meeting was the need for regular, systematic information sharing. Most organisations now have nominated focal points and confidentiality issues are largely resolved. While formal arrangements are not always important or necessary, in some circumstances they can be meaningful. Joint planning meetings with regional follow-up would be important. UN and regional mechanisms should cross-reference one another's standards and jurisprudence. All of these recommendations are already out there and need to be heeded.
72. While sharing information is critical, all suffer nowadays from information overload and sometimes there is a lack of capacity to use the information exchanged. An easy information management tool needs to be found, and a pilot scheme is under way within the UN on this. Information on existing tools should be more widely disseminated. A comprehensive catalogue of reports and recommendations and findings, of the HRC and others could have a major influence on human rights on the ground⁶. The CoE is working on a similar compilation. The two should come together on methodology, with a view to merging over time.
73. NHRAPs, drawing on the recommendations of global and regional mechanisms, are central to implementation on the ground. Discussions on what is taken up in the Plan need to be at the local level, with the participation of civil society, and not headquarters-driven.
74. Cooperation needs to be taking place beyond just institutions. Participating States need to back up the human rights system that is at least in part under attack and provide the mechanisms they have created with the resources required to carry out the work. More attention needs to be given to celebrating successes in the face of current challenges in all regions, especially while universality is again under attack.

Conclusion

As a priority issue for its Chairmanship of the OSCE, and for the coming two years, Switzerland is calling for better implementation of human rights norms. A study has been commissioned which will inspire its work along two main tracks, and in May 2014 a seminar will be organized on how to sharpen the monitoring tools of the OSCE through cooperation with international and other regional organisations, vertical and horizontal.

It has been assumed that coordination leads to effective implementation, and certainly lack of coordination runs the risk of less implementation. But coordination has very real costs, and can even be a tactic to sap the activities of an organisation. Thus coordination must be goal-oriented, and Governments have to be ready to pay the price.

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¹ See A/HRC/23/18: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session23/A-HRC-23-18_en.pdf

² The Guiding Principles for the UN Framework 'respect, Protect and Remedy' elaborated by Professor John Ruggie include the corporate responsibility to respect human rights as the basic expectation society has of business in relation to human rights.

³ Launched in 2002 and currently implemented in some 35 countries, this initiative brings together representatives from the private sector, civil society and government

⁴ As a starting point, see the Universal Human Rights Index - uhri.ohchr.org

⁵ As one suggestion, the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna after 6 months could ask States to report on what they have done to give effect to essential recommendations.

⁶ See footnote 4