

# *Restoring Credibility, Integrity & Accountability To UN Treaty Monitoring Committees*

## **Proposed Strategies**

**I. Letters to UN Secretary General:** Concerned Party Nations should send letters to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressing their concerns with the overreaching of the treaty monitoring committees, making recommendations for reform, and asking him to:

1. Direct the Office of Legal Affairs to issue a report on the following within 90 days:
  - (a) Assessing where treaty committees have exceeded the actual agreed and ratified provisions of the covenant;
  - (b) Providing answers to the questions submitted regarding past decisions, “concluding observations” and comments of the committees;
  - (c) Assessing the wisdom and viability of the reforms recommended by Party Nations; and
  - (d) Providing recommended guidelines (which may include all of the recommended reforms) to remedy the overreaching problem and enable committee members to clearly know the boundaries of their authority. This should include a proposed accountability and removal system, external to the committee and connected to the Party Nations, to restrain committee members from going beyond the actual language of the covenant.
2. Release the report to Member Nations, the treaty committees and the public, along with a statement calling upon the treaty committees to not misuse their review powers.
3. Issue and implement a policy stipulating that the UN respects inalienable human rights, beginning with human life, and does not support or promote abortion.

## **II. Add Reform Recommendations and Debate to National Parties Meetings in 2006:**

Party Nations to the ICCPR or CEDAW could send their reform recommendations to the Secretary General and request their inclusion in the agenda of:

- *14<sup>th</sup> Meeting* of the National Parties of CEDAW, monitored by the CEDAW Committee (New York, June 23, 2006).
- *25<sup>th</sup> Meeting* of the National Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), monitored by the Human Rights Committee (NY: September 7, 2006).

## **III. Human Rights Council:**

- UN Member Nations could incorporate the reform recommendations into guidelines defining and limiting the authority of the Council, including its “universal periodic review” powers, clarifying and limiting the powers of the treaty monitoring committees.

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Mr. Thomas W. Jacobson originally wrote this paper in 2006 when he was serving as Representative to the United Nations for Focus on the Family (U.S.A.), from 2001 to 2010.

#### **IV. Remove Current Chairmen and Pro-Abortion Members of Treaty Committees:**

- CEDAW Member Nations should ***not reappoint*** *Rosario G. Manalo* of the Philippines, the current chairman of the CEDAW Committee, who has abused the powers entrusted to her, been on the Committee since 1999, and whose term expires December 31, 2006.
- CEDAW Member Nations also ***may be wise to reappoint*** *current CEDAW Committee members* who are up for re-election who have demonstrated openness toward respecting both women (e.g., that women deserve better than abortion) and preborn children. The following members may be worthy of being reappointed:
  - Huguette Bokpe Gnacadja [Benin]
  - Dorcas Coker-Appiah [Ghana]
  - Pramila Patten [Mauritius]
- CEDAW Member Nations also would be wise to ***not reappoint*** *current CEDAW Committee members* who are up for re-election (unless they can prove they did not agree with the Committee's decisions to pressure nations on abortion and other evil measures). The following members should not be reappointed:
  - Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani [Algeria]
  - Cornelis Flinterman [Netherlands]
  - Naela Mohamed Gabr [Egypt]
  - Fumiko Saiga [Japan]
  - Dubravka Šimonović [Slovakia]
- ICCPR Member Nations should formally ask France not to reappoint Christine Chanet, the current chairman of the Human Rights Committee, who has abused the powers entrusted to her, has been on the HRC for 18 years, and whose term expires December 31, 2006.

(Appeals to France should be extended well before August 7, the deadline for Party Nations to submit names of candidates for election or reappointment at the States Parties meeting, September 7, 2006.)
- ICCPR Member Nations should not reappoint any Committee members up for re-nomination, except for those from Ireland, the U.S. and possibly Poland, who have been more faithful to fulfill the provisions of the ICCPR, particularly guaranteeing the right to life.

#### **V. National Parties to Covenants should be encouraged to:**

1. **Party Nations are encouraged to be discerning and wise in selecting candidates** for treaty committee membership by ensuring that candidates are “persons of high moral character” (ICCPR, Art. 28.2), accurately understand and are committed to upholding the actual provisions of the covenant, and will not pursue any political agendas, especially that are inconsistent with the covenant.
2. **Party Nations that have not ratified the Optional Protocols should not do so, and those that have ratified the Protocol(s) should withdraw**, because of the endemic problem of the treaty committees misinterpreting the provisions of the covenant, overreaching their authority and arbitrarily pressuring nations to comply with political and personal agendas.