

## Reform and Accountability Recommendations for:

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

UN treaty committee reform should bring needed credibility, integrity and accountability to the treaty compliance committees. Recommended reforms include:

1. **Add a dissenting opinion option** for committee members, and require that all dissenting opinions be translated in the six working languages and be included in all reports and concluding observations related to the specific country review.
2. **Require committee candidates and members to be “persons of high moral character”** (ICCPR, Art. 28.2) consistent with objective standards including demonstrated high regard for the sanctity of human life and other fundamental human rights.
3. **Require** the committee and its members to:
  - (a) **Not go beyond the actual provisions in the convention;**
  - (b) **Eliminate “General Recommendations”** that exceed or are incompatible with the convention;
  - (c) **Cease pressuring nations** to comply with the committee’s recommendations instead of the provisions of the convention;
  - (d) **Not exceed** the boundaries of the **authority** granted them by the convention; and
  - (e) **Restrict their review** of National Party progress to a brief review of country reports submitted and to making unenforceable recommendations (consistent with Art. 2, par. 7, and Art. 62 of the UN Charter).
4. **Add a recorded vote requirement** for all committee decisions.
5. **Create an 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.
6. **Prevent the current chairmen**, at least of the HRC and CEDAW Committees, **from being re-nominated**; their terms expire at the end of 2006. They have pushed the treaty committees far beyond the covenant provisions, and pursued their own agendas.
  - The ICCPR guarantees the “inherent right to life,” but Human Rights Committee Chairman Christine Chanet from France—who has been on the HRC for 18 years—has led efforts to pressure Party Nations to legalize abortion [e.g., from 2003-2005, Colombia, El Salvador, Kenya, Mali, Mauritius, Peru, Poland, Sri Lanka].
  - CEDAW calls upon Party Nations to ensure access to “health care services, including ... family planning” (Art. 12.1, 14.2b), but does not mention abortion. Even so, CEDAW Committee Chairman Rosario Manalo from the Philippines—who has been on the Committee for 17 years—(and previous chairmen) led the Committee in pressuring many Party Nations to legalize or increase access to abortion or abortifacients [e.g., from 1997-2006, Australia, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nepal, Northern Ireland, Paraguay, Portugal, Togo, Zimbabwe].
7. **Ensure equitable geographical representation** on the committees (ICCPR, Art. 31.2).
  - Of the current 18 members of the Human Rights Committee, 6 are from European nations.
  - Of the current 23 members of the CEDAW Committee, 8 are from European nations.
  - On the Committee on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights, 6 of 18 are from European nations.

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