

**Human Rights Council organizational meeting**

**22 June 2007**

**Statement by Special Procedures Coordination Committee Chairperson**

**Ms. Gay McDougall**

*Thank you for inviting me to be with you today. I welcome this opportunity to interact with you in my new role as Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures. My fellow mandate holders have asked that I deliver the following message:*

We welcome the agreement reached on 18 June 2007 by the Human Rights Council concerning the institution-building process and the flexibility demonstrated in arriving at this outcome. This past year, you have established a new framework for the protection and promotion of human rights - we look forward to working with you during the upcoming year to focus on effective implementation of this framework. We have particularly appreciated the enhanced opportunities to engage in interactive dialogues with the Council in the past year. We are committed to continued engagement and dialogue with you and trust that you will support our work, including by ensuring cooperation and follow up.

The institution building text contains many interesting elements, and there are several areas where we believe we can make meaningful contributions. We are particularly interested in the establishment of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and very much look forward to making substantive contributions to this mechanism. We also take note of the establishment of the new Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and intend to explore possible synergies with this body. As each mandate is

considered for renewal in the coming year, we anticipate actively discussing our respective mandates with the Council, as well as discussing the broader special procedures framework, with a view to improving and strengthening the special procedures system as a whole. With regard to the selection of mandate holders, we look forward to contributing to the technical criteria to be adopted at the sixth session of the Council and submitting input for the consideration of the Consultative Group as provided for in the agreed consensus.

We reaffirm our intention to continue working closely with the Council to ensure implementation of human rights obligations, to build the capacity of States to guarantee the protection of human rights, and to promote cooperation and dialogue with all States. The review process has been an important catalyst for the special procedures system and has encouraged self reflection. In this regard, we have made significant efforts in the past year to coordinate our work, and during this past week at our Annual Meeting, we have discussed an enhanced role for the Coordinating Committee.

We have taken note that a Code of Conduct has been adopted by the Human Rights Council and we have begun to concretize our mechanisms of accountability, including a mechanism to give appropriate consideration to any matter brought to the attention of the Coordinating Committee.

We take the decision of the Council on institution-building as an affirmation of support of special procedures. We will follow closely how these important decisions are put into practice and reiterate our willingness to be constructively involved in this process. In this regard, we are eager to continue our cooperation with the Council to

ensure a robust, comprehensive human rights system that responds to the needs of victims.