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The Secretariat of the United Nations (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva of States Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The Secretariat has the honour to refer to the decision by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on additional measures to simplify the reporting procedure and increase predictability, taken at its 67th session in March 2020, modalities of which were further agreed upon at its 68th Session in October 2020.

The Committee decided to introduce, subject to availability of resources, starting from 2022 at the earliest, a predictable review cycle in order to improve predictability in reporting and to facilitate regular reporting by all States Parties, in line with the General Assembly resolution 68/268. The predictable review cycle will be based on an eight-year calendar, which includes periods for the submission of reports and constructive dialogue with the Committee.

At this stage, to facilitate planning, the secretariat would appreciate receiving feedback only from any State not wishing to avail itself of this procedure, if such would be the case, and an indication of this. Any State thus wishing to opt-out and maintain the standard reporting procedure is kindly invited to notify the secretariat by 1 March 2021.

Those States Parties that have already accepted the simplified reporting procedure for the ICESCR during the pilot phase are not expected to take any further action. States Parties preparing reports or with reports overdue or due in 2021 are invited to submit the reports as planned.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office in Geneva, the assurances of its highest consideration.

7 January 2021

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