



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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INFORMATION NOTE

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE WORK OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINTS AND URGENT ACTIONS PROCEDURES IN LIGHT OF THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Human rights treaty bodies, which have a procedure allowing individuals to submit complaints or urgent actions, are adjusting their work in light of the unprecedented global health crisis provoked by the spread of COVID-19.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which is supporting these procedures, is maintaining its activities. Further to United Nations Secretariat requirements and those of the authorities of the Host Country, Switzerland, teleworking has been put in place within the Office, as a general rule to ensure continuity of tasks.

United Nations premises, including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights are no longer accessible to the public and sessions of Committees scheduled until June 2020 have been postponed.

The Secretariat's essential activities will in principle be maintained and especially the handling of requests for interim measures and urgent actions under the relevant treaties. In that regard, complainants are strongly encouraged to submit any urgent requests electronically at the following email address: petitions@ohchr.org

Given the difficulties that States parties and authors of communications may face in meeting established deadlines, an automatic two-month extension of deadlines to provide observations or comments for all registered cases is herewith granted to the parties. This extension will not apply to the initial deadline established for Urgent Actions submitted to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances. This extension will also not apply to interim measures requests, the implementation of which should be immediate.

These measures will be kept under permanent review in light of the evolution of the current situation.