**Canada’s Response to the OHCHR questionnaire on implementation of GA resolution 68/268**

1. The UN human rights treaty bodies play an essential, foundational role in the protection of universal human rights and their effective implementation by all states parties. Canada remains firmly committed to the continuing efforts to enhance the effective functioning of the treaty body system in the context of GA resolution 68/268. To this end, Canada looks forward to engaging substantively and constructively with member states and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) during the upcoming review.
2. Canada believes that efforts to strengthen the treaty bodies must be focussed and deliberate to ensure the overall system is enhanced in order for it to play its intended role, for all states. In this spirit, Canada proposes that addressing the following key issues could lead to tangible improvements in the effectiveness of the treaty body system (TBS).

*Individual communications*

1. The efficient and effective functioning of the individual communications system of the TBS is of key importance to Canada. It is an important way by which victims of violations are provided with an effective remedy. In order to do so, it must be transparent, accessible and efficient. Canada meaningfully engages in individual complaints processes, and dedicates resources to address each and every one. We are of the view that all users of the individual communications system would benefit from the allocation of appropriate financial, human and technical resources to the Petitions Unit to enable it to more systematically manage the growing number of communications it receives and at the same time reduce the existing backlog.

*Predictable reporting calendar*

1. The TBS would benefit from a renewed approach to the development of predictable reporting calendars, allowing states, the Committees and all other participants in the reporting process to better prepare for periodic reviews before the treaty bodies, several (2-3) years in advance. In this respect, greater coordination and coherence in the development of calendars across all treaty bodies could help to avoid situations where a state is invited to appear before more than 2 treaty bodies in a year. Such an approach would also have the benefit of increasing engagement by smaller states, increasing efficiency while reducing the burden placed on them. If a fixed calendar is not possible, one option could be for the calendars to be reviewed at the treaty body Chairs meeting every year to ensure coherence.

*Alignment of working methods*

1. Canada recognizes the efforts and progress made by the treaty bodies in enhancing harmonization of working methods in accordance with 68/268. There remains room to explore further effective measures on working methods and procedural matters, including greater coherence and standardization across the different treaty bodies with respect to the use of the simplified reporting procedure. This would facilitate a focussed and constructive dialogue between States Parties and treaty bodies with the beneficial outcome of recommendations that can be implemented to effectively enhance the promotion and protection of human rights domestically.
2. Canada supports the following specific measures, among others:

* the consistent use of the simplified reporting procedure by all treaty bodies;
* the development of a more focused, targeted and where possible coordinated list of issues to guide states parties in preparing reports and for reviews;
* adoption of effective working methods for the consideration of reports of States Parties that focus on ensuring a constructive dialogue, with sufficient time for the State Party under review to respond to questions from treaty body members;
* the development of more focused and targeted concluding observations which would allow for more effective follow-up on implementation;
* greater alignment across the treaty bodies on follow-up procedures; and
* strengthening the role of the treaty body Chairs to enable collective decision-making on procedural matters to ensure coherence and standardized working methods.

*Secretariat support*

1. Greater consideration is also required in terms of ensuring that the OHCHR is properly resourced to support all lines of work for which it holds responsibility in the treaty body system. Support to the treaty bodies’ mandates in terms of reporting, interactive dialogues, follow-up procedures, inquiries, early warning and urgent actions, as well as increasing number of general comments, along with individual communications has resulted in greater demands on the secretariat.

*Election of treaty body members*

1. Finally, renewed commitment by states to nominate and elect treaty body members with the recognized competence, expertise and experience necessary to fulfill their mandate under the human rights treaties should also be considered in this process.