

United Nations Human Rights Council: 21st Session
Joint Oral statement Item 6 – General Debate
Conectas Direitos Humanos, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, UPR Info
21 September, 2012

Thank you.

The following statement is made on behalf of Conectas Direitos Humanos, the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), and UPR Info.

We are highly alarmed by the increasingly common practice of states altering or retracting recommendations they have publicly made during the UPR review of a country through “back room” political trade-offs that lack any transparency or accountability. Such practices have resulted in a weakening of the recommendations in the reports of Brazil and Morocco. Evidence of this practice can clearly be seen in the footnotes of the working group reports. This practice goes to the heart of the legitimacy of the UPR process and its relevance for civil society and other stakeholders within the country under review and around the world. Considering that stakeholders engage for up to four years in a serious effort to ensure specific recommendations are raised in the plenary, their inputs should not be erased in this manner. We believe this practice strongly undermines the participation of stakeholders within the UPR process. We call on states under review to publicly pledge to refrain from engaging in this practise.

We also call on the recommending states to refuse to be part of this practice, to ensure that the recommendation made during the WG remains unchanged.

Moreover, the practice of the State under review drafting the summary section of its own statement within the report of the UPR Working Group is also of concern.

Lastly, when factual mistakes and mistranslation of language occur within the report of the Working Group, only the country which made the statement may request that corrections be made to that text. This practise seems unnecessary and could potentially increase the chance of inaccuracies being included in the final outcome document.

Thank you.