

Human Rights Council 15<sup>th</sup> session – Item 6 – General Debate  
Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD) and Franciscans  
International

Thank you, Mr. President.

It is a pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of a Steering Committee of 9 human rights and indigenous peoples' organizations seeking the effective implementation and follow-up of Canada's UPR outcome.

We would like to call to the Council's attention the need for every State who has undergone UPR to hold timely, effective, broad, and transparent domestic consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, indigenous peoples and other rights-holders or their representatives on the implementation of UPR recommendations and commitments. Such consultations are a necessary and integral step to ensuring effective implementation of UPR outcomes.

Mr. President,

Within its UPR, Canada agreed to explore "opportunities for improving established processes, including with respect to follow-up to treaty body and UPR recommendations," and committed to considering "options for enhancing existing mechanisms and procedures related to the implementation of international human rights obligations."

We regret to inform the Council that we are now within a few months of the two year anniversary of Canada's UPR, and there is no sign of significant progress in implementing the kinds of serious reforms to these processes that have been called for.

A few groups have now been invited to a half day meeting of civil society, Indigenous peoples and government officials planned for September 29<sup>th</sup>, focusing on "the elaboration of a process for consultations with civil society and Indigenous organizations with respect to international human rights treaties and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)."

While we welcome the opportunity to meet with officials at that time, we are concerned, after such a long delay, that the proposed meeting is insufficient both in terms of the time allotted to the discussion and the breadth of groups invited. We are hopeful that this meeting represents only the start of a broader engagement with the reform process, including parliamentary committees and open meetings with federal/provincial/territorial governments, civil society and Indigenous peoples.

We urge the government to initiate a more inclusive, committed and sustained process of reform, focussing on the central components that we believe must be addressed in the current processes. These are the components that have been identified with some consistency by UN treaty bodies, members of the Human Rights Council, parliamentary committees and civil society and Indigenous peoples on the key components that are needed to ensure effective implementation procedures and mechanisms.

The process of reform should include hearings before parliamentary committees, a federal/provincial/territorial ministerial meeting and accessible consultations with civil society and Indigenous peoples outside of Ottawa, with appropriate levels of financial support for travel costs.

We urge the government that this matter be given the highest priority in the current session of Parliament. We also look forward to greater engagement with the government on the implementation of other aspects of Canada's UPR outcome.

And finally, we urge the Council to play an active role in ensuring the implementation of the human rights-consistent aspects of UPR outcomes of all UN Member States.