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Agenda item 19 (f)

**Social and human rights questions: human rights**

**Letter dated 19 July 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement delivered by the representative of the Russian Federation during the coordination and management meeting of the Economic and Social Council, under item 19 (f) of its agenda, entitled “Social and human rights questions: human rights” (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Economic and Social Council, under agenda item 19 (f).

*(Signed)* V. Nebenzia



**Annex to the letter dated 19 July 2019 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Statement made by the representative of the Russian Federation at the coordination and management meeting of the Economic and Social Council under agenda item 19 (f), entitled “Social and human rights questions: human rights”**

6 June 2019

Madam President,

We would like to take the opportunity during discussion of this sub-item to comment on some aspects of the work of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

It will be recalled that the main objective of that body is to consider national reports submitted by States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and to make recommendations on the basis of those reports. As can be seen from the report of the Committee on its sixty-third and sixty-fourth sessions ([E/2019/22-E/C.12/2018/3](#)), submitted for the consideration of the Council, the Committee was able to rise to the challenge of minimizing the backlog of country reports awaiting examination. However, let us not forget that these results have been made possible not only through the work undertaken to streamline the Committee’s activities, but also through the allocation, in 2013–2014, of additional meeting time for the Committee.

In that connection, we would point out that it has frequently failed to make optimal use of its official meeting time. In the past year alone, the Committee has held some 10 meetings with non-governmental organizations, the academic community and United Nations system entities, instead of making more rational use of its time to conduct dialogue with States parties to the Covenant.

A matter of concern is the increasing tendency of the members of the Committee to make a liberal interpretation of their powers. In particular, we cannot but be preoccupied by the experts’ practice of adopting general comments and statements by the Committee that will in the future become binding on States, as new mandatory standards. We would like to recall that this body does not have a normative function, and that such documents are solely the private opinion of the Committee members. Furthermore, as can be concluded from annex II to the report, equal account is not taken of the views of all experts.

Lastly, we would like to ask questions regarding the legality of the Committee holding joint meetings with the Human Rights Committee, as well as of the plans for a consolidated list of issues in connection with reporting by States. Such attempts to combine the work of the two Committees clearly demonstrate blatant disregard for the legal instruments that established them.

Thank you for your attention.

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