

# Statement of EIP

## ORAL STATEMENT REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF THE UPR REPORT ON THE USA

Mr President, we acknowledge the US government's unprecedented level of civil society engagement throughout the UPR. However, it is critical that the UPR be about more than just process – the Administration must take concrete action to implement the recommendations in the UPR Report, recommendations that reflect long-standing calls from civil society in the US and the international community.

We are aware of the US administration's wish to assert its moral and political leadership in the area of human rights enforcement. However, state leadership in the area of human rights suggests that a state is acting to uphold international norms and standards at home and abroad.

For the US to assert leadership it must banish to the dustbins of history its claim for US exceptionalism, which is based on a national narrative that is more myth than reality.

There is nothing exceptional about the fact that the US has not ratified most core human rights instruments and maintains RUD's to the few treaties it has ratified.

There is nothing exceptional about the fact that in these times of economic crisis, where millions of Americans are unemployed, hungry, lack adequate housing, affordable health care and education; the US administration continues to reject economic, social and cultural rights as human rights.

There is nothing exceptional about the fact that 60 years after a landmark court decision that began the dismantling of the US apartheid system, Black youth unemployment rates are up to 60 percent in some areas; and that Black, Latino and Native people make up the vast majority of the over two million people incarcerated in the world's largest penal system. And when they are not being imprisoned, Black and Brown youth are illegally killed by police across the country.

There is nothing exceptional about the fact that the demands for self-determination by indigenous people are continually ignored, and Puerto Rico languishes in political limbo.

There is nothing exceptional about the fact that despite its high-sounding commitment to due process, fair trials and justice, the US indefinitely detains, without charge or effective access to justice, dozens in Guantanamo, joining the over 100 Black, Latino, Native and anti-racist White political prisoners still languishing in the inhumane conditions of super-max prisons in the US.

Mr. President, while the Administration will argue that it has limited ability to address many of the 228 recommendations received from this body, there is no doubt they can implement, at the very least:

- 1) an internal mechanism in the executive branch to educate, coordinate and monitor human rights compliance among federal agencies;
- 2) the establishment of national human rights institution;
- 3) the setting up a permanent mechanism for engaging representatives from US civil society in the human rights accountability structures and the development of national plans of action.

Freed from its national self-delusions and committed to objective principles and agreed-upon international norms, the US can play a critical role in the ongoing struggle for a new conception and practice of human rights.

Thank you, Mr President.