



**30th session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 6 – Adoption of the UPR of the United States of America**

Human Rights Watch urges the United States to improve how it implements accepted UPR recommendations. While the United States has properly sought to engage civil society prior to its review, as well as during its consideration of recommendations, we are concerned that such engagement will diminish after today, much as it did during the last UPR cycle.

For example, during its first UPR in 2010, the United States agreed to a recommendation from France to “undertake studies to determine the factors of racial disparity in the application of the death penalty.” Yet no study was undertaken. The United States agreed to a recommendation from Haiti to review mandatory minimum criminal sentences to assess disproportional impact on racial minorities; again, no review was undertaken.

Regrettably, the United States appears to use the process more as a way to highlight its current policies than to commit to improving its record on human rights at home. We urge the United States to not treat the UPR process as a static one, but as a dynamic commitment to improve its domestic human rights record.

We note the United States has now accepted two recommendations to look into racial and ethnic disparities in application of the death penalty, very similar to the French recommendation accepted by the United States in 2010. To avoid repeating that failure to implement this recommendation, we urge the United States to specify how it plans to undertake these reviews, which agency within the US government will lead them, how it will engage civil society in those reviews, and to set benchmarks to measure progress in implementing that recommendation.

The United States also accepted the Swiss recommendation to “Allow an independent body to investigate allegations of torture and to end the impunity of perpetrators” but also explained that the United States “will continue to conduct thorough independent investigations of credible allegations of torture.” However, to date, no new investigations have been opened since the release in 2014 of the Senate report summary of the CIA’s detention and interrogation program, which exposed important revelations about US use of torture. We urge the United States to follow-through on this promise.