

## PANEL III—UNIVERSAL AND REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEMS AND THE POTENTIAL FOR UNITED STATES ACCESSION TO THE AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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This morning's discussion concerns the operations of the universal and regional human rights systems and the potential for the United States' accession to the American Convention on Human Rights. All of the systems to be discussed this morning are multilateral in nature.

After yesterday's meeting it occurred to me that a basic premise behind any multilateral system of legal principles is that those who have negotiated understand that they must have the flexibility to agree to a generally acceptable standard. I know from my modest experience in the unification and harmonization of law that the more you leave to each state and the more you recognize the right of each state to use its own standards, the less you unify a system. Thus, the more the United States insists that multilateral instruments resemble United States law, the more difficult the process of the universalization of human rights principles will be.

