

STATEMENT BY MR. SANJAY NIRUPAM, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 64 – REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL AT THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 30, 2009



Mr. President,

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to address the General Assembly on the important issue of the "Report of the Human Rights Council".

At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the President of the Human Rights Council for his report.

Mr. President,

My delegation notes positively the promise shown by the Human Rights Council since its inception in 2006 as the premier organ of the United Nations dealing with human rights. Considerable progress has been made in the last three years in strengthening of its institutional mechanism as well as reviewing, improving and rationalizing all mandates, mechanisms, functions and responsibilities of the former Commission on Human Rights.

Mr. President,

The strength of the Human Rights Council lies in its emphasis on dialogue, cooperation, transparency and non-selectivity in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedom for all. The enthusiastic participation of Member States in the Universal Periodic Review process till date is a pointer in this direction. This also underscores the success of this innovative mechanism, which has provided a platform for sharing of national experiences and best practices in consultation and with the consent of the country concerned.

The importance of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism was rightly summed up by the Secretary General when he said "this mechanism has great potential to promote and protect human rights in the darkest corners of the world".

Mr. President,

The holding of the special sessions on thematic issues over the past one and half years attests to the wide ranging debate being conducted in the Council. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue to engage constructively with all Member States, and strive to make the Council more effective, responsive and efficient. We strongly believe that international community can advance our common cause through dialogue and interaction.

Mr. President,

The Human Rights Council is still evolving. It is important that we continue to provide collective guidance to the Council and help it mature. We should also ensure that these efforts are inclusive and respect the diversity in historical national experiences, cultures and development of different countries.

In this regard, we would like to state that we look forward to the forthcoming review process of the functioning of the Human Right Council in 2011.

Let me take this opportunity to also reaffirm our trust in the work and independence of the Special Procedures mandate-holders. While commendable work has been done by them, it is important that they exercise responsibility and be sensitive in discharging their respective mandates.

The Human Rights Council has provided mandate-holders with the Code of Conduct; it is important that this is adhered to.

Any attempt to reinterpret the Code of Conduct or depart from their mandates would weaken the mandate holders and the important functions entrusted to them by the Human Rights Council. In this regard, we welcome the Council's resolution, 11/11, on the System of Special Procedures.

Mr. President,

We are encouraged by the efforts of the Human Rights Council to translate the Right to Development into a reality. Discussions on the Right to Development are gradually moving away from the realm of theory and principles into design and implementation of policies, leading to its realisation. In this connection, we note the significant contribution of the Working Group on the Right to Development.

Mr. President,

The Council must play a central role in denouncing terrorism, which poses the biggest threat to our common efforts towards peace, security and development. It also undermines the very foundations of freedom and democracy and enjoyment of human rights, including the most important fundamental right of them all, namely the right to life.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to say that the work of the Human Rights Council should proceed in a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. It should strive to promote human rights through international cooperation and genuine dialogue among Member States, including capacity-building and mutual assistance.

India remains committed in making the Human Rights Council a strong, effective and efficient body capable of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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