

STATEMENT BY MR. P. RAJEEVE, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND
MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 64
“REPORT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL” AT THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON NOVEMBER 13, 2013

Mr. President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council for his briefing on the activities of the Council.

Human rights questions are amongst the most important and cross-cutting of all subjects in the realm of international discussions today. 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 freedoms for all.



We believe that the HRC should emerge as a forum for voluntary participation and sharing of national experiences and best practices in the protection and promotion of human rights. There should be an emphasis on capacity-building of States through technical and financial assistance.

Mr. President,

It goes without saying that actions of the UN and its organs should be anchored in the principles of the UN Charter. We believe that collaboration of all States in the spirit of equal and mutually respectful dialogue is the most effective tool to promote and protect human rights. This would not only strengthen the confidence of all interested parties in the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms but

also contribute to the reinforcement of its political and moral authority and credibility.

We would like to express our appreciation for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navenetham Pillay and her Office in supporting the work of the Human Rights Council. Serious thought needs to be given to increasing the accountability of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council. We believe that our common endeavour to promote and protect all human rights for all globally can be advanced further through a formalized interaction that will strengthen institutional linkages between the Council and OHCHR.

Regular interaction between the OHCHR and the HRC in Geneva and the GA in New York is important for deliberations on issues such as OHCHR's strategic thematic priorities, budgetary considerations, staffing, etc. It remains a matter of concern that the OHCHR depends for two-third of its budget through voluntary funding. This financial dependence distorts strategic planning and allocation of available resources in OHCHR's work. The geographical imbalance in the staffing pattern of the OHCHR also continues to be a matter of concern. These matters require greater attention and deliberation.

Mr. President,

Special Procedures is an important mechanism of the Human Rights Council for a "genuine dialogue for strengthening the capacity of member states". It is, therefore, important that Special Rapporteurs maintain confidence by adhering to the code of conduct and their mandates established by the HRC. We also reiterate the importance of ensuring equitable distribution of financial resources among all Special Procedures mandate holders through a transparent process.

In this regard, we would like to request the President of the Human Rights Council to reflect on these important issues and exchange views on what steps can be taken by the Council.

Mr. President,

I would like to also briefly refer to the issue of reprisals. We share the view that any act of reprisal or intimidation is unacceptable and must be dealt with effectively. However, we regret that the Human Rights Council could not address this issue in a unified manner. We are in fact concerned at attempts in the Council to trespass into areas that are not strictly within its mandate.

The appointment of a UN-wide mechanism on reprisals that will deal with other UN entities not primarily dealing with human rights issues is the prerogative of the body that has universal representation. We would have preferred that such matters be transmitted to the competent body i.e. the General Assembly, of which the Human Rights Council is a subsidiary body. Here, we would like to underline the importance of the Council's adherence to the Institutional Building Package in carrying out its mandate.

Mr. President,

Allow me to also place on record our appreciation to the President of the Human Rights Council, Mr. Remigiusz Henczel for the smooth and effective manner in which he has conducted the deliberations of the Council. We also appreciate his efforts in streamlining the work of the Council through the annual voluntary calendar of HRC thematic resolutions.

We believe that the Human Rights Council should continue to rationalize and prioritize its work to make the most efficient use of limited resources. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue to engage constructively with all member states to make the Council more effective, efficient and responsive. We believe that we can advance our common cause only through dialogue and cooperation.

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