

STATEMENT BY MR. DUSHYANT SINGH, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON AGENDA
ITEM 69 – PROMOTION & PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS [A]
IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS, [D] COMPREHENSIVE
IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE VIENNA DECLARATION AND
PROGRAMME OF ACTION AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 66TH SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 18, 2011

Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary General for his reports under the agenda item Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and also the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the various treaty bodies for their reports.



Mr. Chairman,

The mission of the promotion and protection of human rights within the United Nations was put on a firm footing with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. We are proud of the part played by India's Hansa Mehta in drafting the UDHR, giving prominence in the Declaration for equal rights for women and men. The international community has since adopted several international human rights instruments in the last 60 years.

The Human Rights Council is an important body that the international community has carefully constructed to strengthen the protection of human rights around the globe. We are happy with the successful completion of the Review process in which India actively participated. We must consciously ensure that Council continues to function in a non-selective, non-politicized and transparent manner.

We consider the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to be a positive, indeed a unique mechanism that enhances our commitment to making a genuine difference to the improvement of human rights on ground. We must congratulate ourselves on the successful completion of the first UPR Cycle just last week when review of all the 192 States of the UN was completed. The UPR is truly a

universal, transparent mechanism, a potent instrument for change where all stake holders participate directly or indirectly.

We acknowledge the important role played by treaty bodies in monitoring the implementation of the treaty obligations by the state parties. Recommendations made by these bodies have greatly contributed to strengthening domestic legal regimes and best practices identified have assisted governments in finding new ways to promote and protect human rights of their citizens. We encourage them to uphold their independence in the performance of their functions.

Mr. Chairman,

Every time a gross violation of human rights occurs in any part of the world, it shocks the conscience of the international community. The process of monitoring and protecting human rights is not easy and the international community must continue its endeavor to unify their forces in the fight against perpetrators who commit gross violations. In that context it is important to recognize that targeting countries for intrusive monitoring is only indicative of a bias and does not further the cause of human rights. There is no doubt that human rights abuses must be addressed but it should be done in a comprehensive manner through cooperation, dialogue and consultation.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community took a major step in the promotion and protection of human rights by adopting the Vienna Declaration and Programme of action in 1993. It was explicitly recognized for the first time that gross violations of human rights anywhere is a matter of grave concern for the international community. The Programme of Action exhorted states to adopt policies and programmes to enhance human rights situation including introduction of human rights, humanitarian law, democracy and rule of law as subjects in the curricula of all learning institutions in formal and non-formal settings.

India attaches much importance to the Right to Development, and recognizes that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process. Lasting progress in this respect requires effective development policies at national level as well as equitable economic relations at the international level. A co-ordinated international effort is required to ensure that States establish, promote and sustain national and international arrangements that create an enabling environment for the realization of the Right to Development. The occasion of the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Right to development by the General Assembly provides the international community an opportunity to reiterate its commitment to make a global concerted effort to effectively translate the Right to Development into a reality for all.

As a State Party of the principal covenants on human rights, and of practically all other major human rights instruments, India has accorded equal

importance to all rights. India has consistently promoted civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. While the Constitution of India is the bedrock of our legal and political system, India's independent judiciary, a free and vibrant media and civil society have reinforced the safeguards in order to ensure that these human rights for our citizens are not denied.

India has made important strides in facilitating the enjoyment of human rights of its citizens in the last two decades. India established an Independent Human Rights Commission in 1993. India has also enacted the 'Right to Information Act' to ensure transparency and accountability of government's activities. The remedy of public interest litigations, was crafted by the judiciary, to ensure that even the most vulnerable sections of society who may not be able to approach courts otherwise, can seek justice via a public-spirited person or organization. This process of judicial redressal has been extremely effective in providing remedies to detainees, children and other vulnerable groups. A separate institutional mechanism in the form of National Commission for Women was also created to investigate and register complaints of violations of rights of women. Recently India began implementing the Right to education Act which applies to all schools whether private or public. Various laws relating to human rights are underway in parliament including the National food Security bill and the National rural employment guarantee bill.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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