

**76<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
Agenda Item 69:  
Report of the Human Rights Council**

**INDIA STATEMENT  
by  
Mr. Ashish Sharma, First Secretary**

**29 October 2021**

**Mr. President and Excellencies,**

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council Ms. Nazhat Shameem for her report and for the briefing on the activities of the Council.

I would also like to convey our appreciation for the smooth and effective manner in which she has conducted the deliberations of the Council.

**Mr. President,**

As an ancient civilization of immense diversity and as the world's largest democracy, India firmly believes in the principles of pluralism and rule of law for effective realization of all human rights.

Human rights considerations are deeply ingrained in the inclusive development efforts in India that has lifted millions out of poverty. Women's leadership and political participation, especially at the grassroots level, has played a pivotal role in this context. Our approach to realization of human rights globally, is inspired by our own experiences of being a pluralistic and vibrant democracy.

India's active engagement with the global human rights agenda dates back to the early days of the Commission on Human Rights and the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights treaties.

India has always played an active role in global promotion and protection of human rights. We believe that promotion and protection of human rights are best pursued through dialogue, consultation and cooperation among UN Member States and through provision of technical assistance and capacity building.

Since its establishment fifteen years ago, the Human Rights Council has strengthened consensus on a wide range of thematic issues.

As member of the Council, India has always made efforts to ensure that the Council functions in an objective, non-selective, non-politicized, inclusive and transparent manner.

**Mr. President,**

The Council should promote and protect all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis.

The human rights agenda, including the Council's contribution towards prevention of human rights violations, must be pursued in a fair manner with due respect for the principles of UN Charter such as national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of States.

The selective focus of the Council on certain human rights issues and situations runs counterproductive to the Council's mandate of global promotion and protection of all human rights.

We place emphasis on the spirit of constructive dialogue and cooperation that should guide the work of the Council. As regards country-specific initiatives, it is of paramount importance that these initiatives enjoy the support of the concerned Member States so that they lead to the desired impact on the ground.

The unique and inclusive mechanism of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) has bolstered the credibility and effectiveness of the Council. We need to retain its universality and further improve its efficiency by rationalizing recommendations and by avoiding using it for imposing specific thematic issues that may not have acquired universal acceptance. It must be strengthened by allotting sufficient time for having fruitful exchanges of views.

**Mr. President,**

We believe that a more balanced geographical representation in all HRC bodies and mechanisms is necessary to promote objectivity and effectiveness. This will bring in diversity, grassroots knowledge and empathy, that in turn would contribute to constructive engagement with member states and other stakeholders.

The Special Procedures are an important mechanism of the Council for a genuine dialogue for strengthening the capacity of Member States. It is of utmost importance that mandate holders carry out their duties in conformity with the Code of Conduct as stipulated in HRC resolution 5/2 and in accordance to their respective mandates. This would enhance mutual confidence and trust with the member States.

While issuing press releases and statements, the Special Procedures should take in to account the perspectives of and the information provided by Member States. It is of paramount importance that statements and press releases of Special Procedures are based on verified information as emphasized in the Code of Conduct.

**Mr. President,**

Today, the scourge of terrorism is the gravest violation of human rights. Despite terrorism being acknowledged as one of the foremost global challenges, meaningful collective responses to address this menace continues remain inadequate.

We appreciate the role of HRC in advocating a balanced approach that considers the impact of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights while espousing international cooperation to combat the menace of terrorism.

We will continue to seek cooperation of all States to prevent any support from reaching terrorist groups, to deny terrorists safe havens and to extradite the perpetrators of terrorist acts or supporters.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, we remain committed to bringing a pluralistic, moderate and balanced perspective to help build bridges across multiple divides in the human rights discourse and practice.

**I thank you**