

AS DELIVERED

PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

11TH SESSION (02-18 JUNE 2009)

**Report of the Independent Expert on the
Question of Human Rights and Extreme Poverty**

(5 June 2009)

Statement by India

Mr. President

India thanks the independent expert, Ms. Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona for her report on the important mandate of Human Rights and Extreme Poverty. We welcome her initiative to focus on the thematic issue of Cash Transfer Programmes, or CTPs, in her first report to the Human Rights Council. As non-contributory programmes providing cash payments to individuals or households, CTPs have played a significant role in reducing income inequalities and in curbing the intergenerational transmission of poverty, and could be used as an instrument for states to fulfil their obligations under national and international human rights law.

Mr President

Poverty eradication remains an overriding priority for India. The challenge is to find a development path that is not only sustainable but is also socially just and inclusive. India has a three pronged strategy for poverty eradication: one, economic growth and overall development; two, human development with emphasis on health, education and minimum needs, including protection of human rights and raising the social status of the weak and the poor; and, three, directly targeted programmes for poverty alleviation

AS DELIVERED

through employment generation, training, and building up the poor's asset endowment. CTPs aimed at the most vulnerable of our poor, constitute an important facet of our Targeted Poverty Alleviation Programmes and come under the aegis of the National Social Assistance Plan - a scheme under which assistance is provided in line with the Directive Principles enshrined in Articles 41 and 42 of the Constitution.

Mr. President

India takes note of the Human Rights Framework for CTPs outlined in the report, and the recommendations made. We also believe that transparency, accountability and access to information are vital for the success of CTPs. However, it should be borne in mind that CTPs are not necessarily the most appropriate and effective means of tackling extreme poverty and protecting human rights in all contexts, and should be seen as only one component of social assistance policies. More importantly, as the report itself states, human rights standards should not necessarily prescribe specific policy measures, and states should have the discretion to formulate policies that are most appropriate for their circumstances while ensuring that international human rights obligations are taken fully into account during the design, implementation and evaluation of social policies related to poverty.

In conclusion, Mr President, we hope that this report fosters and furthers dialogue between the human rights community and policymakers, development practitioners, economists and social researchers involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of CTPs.

Thank You Mr. President.