

UPR WORKING GROUP – Twelfth SESSION

(03-14 October 2011)

UPR of Syrian Arab Republic – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

(07 October 2011)

INTERVENTION BY INDIA

Madam President,

India extends a warm welcome to the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic led by H.E. Dr. Faysal Mekdad, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and thanks them for the presentation of their National report, which demonstrates their commitment to the UPR mechanism even when the country is going through momentous changes. We encourage them to continue this commitment in right earnest during the UPR follow-up process as well.

02. We welcome the series of reform measures initiated by the Government of Syria aimed at improving the democratic system and the strengthening public freedoms, including the adoption of the Political Parties Act, ending the state of emergency, abolishing the Supreme State Security Court, setting up of reform committees for the elimination of corruption and initiation and implementation of judicial reforms. We note the Government's recognition of the importance of these reforms, its commitment to them, and its resolve to follow up on their implementation. We encourage the Government to involve all segments of the society in implementing the reforms so that aspirations of all sections of the Syrian society are addressed.

03. We echo the commendation by the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, of Syria's commitment to realising the right to health, including its commitment to provide comprehensive health care services for up to 1.5 million Iraqi refugees. Despite the absence of a specific legal framework for

the protection of refugees, Syria has been generous in welcoming refugees. We appreciate Syria's grant of citizenship to the Kurdish population registered as foreigners in the Governorate of Hassake in April 2011.

04. The report mentions the Syrian Commission for Family Affairs that has legal personality and reports to the Prime Minister. We would request the delegation to provide further information on the working of this Commission and the results achieved, including in particular, the tangible effects in ensuring the human rights of women and children.

05. In conclusion, we would encourage Syria to consider the establishment of a national human rights institution that is fully compliant with the Paris Principles.

Thank you, Madam President.
