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PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

16TH SESSION (28 Feb-25 Mar 2011)

AGENDA ITEM 2: Interactive Dialogue on the Annual Report of the UN

High Commissioner for Human Rights

(03 March 2011)

Statement by India

Mr. President,

We thank the High Commissioner, Ms Navanethem Pillay, for her Annual Report containing an informative overview of the activities undertaken last year by OHCHR. In doing so, the report focuses on the implementation of the six thematic priorities established by the Office for the biennium 2010-11.

Mr. President,

2. We would like to make four observations with regard to the Annual Report:

- a) One, given that food prices have risen around the world for seven straight months in a row and pushed an estimated 44 million more people into extreme poverty, we thank the High Commissioner for having drawn attention to this issue in her introduction to the Annual Report. We would have, however, preferred that the Report provide us more information and analysis in this respect, since the Report

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would have us believe that OHCHR activities pertaining to this vital issue over the last year amounted to just one paragraph of a single line. We are aware that OHCHR published, during the year, a new fact-sheet on the right to adequate food, but this should not be a substitute for greater OHCHR efforts that this issue merits:

- b) Two, while we appreciate the OHCHR's activities mentioned under the third thematic priority relating to economic, social and cultural rights, we notice that this priority has been given relatively less space in the Annual Report. While we would *not* like to believe this to reflect the relative importance attached by the OHCHR to economic, social and cultural rights, we would encourage more equitable space allocation in the Report in future;
- c) Three, we appreciate the focus that the High Commissioner has been seeking to put on the issue of treaty body reforms in view of the growth of treaty bodies and the need to make them more coherent and effective. To that end, we look forward to the consultation with States Parties being proposed by the High Commissioner. At the same time, we would like to emphasize the need for such consultations with States Parties to be appropriate, adequate and inclusive, given that the success of treaty bodies lies, in large part, on their ability to elicit cooperation from States Parties;
- d) Four, while we note that the High Commissioner has, as required by the Council resolution 13/1, submitted a separate report to the Council on the composition of the staff of OHCHR, we would reiterate our request to her to update the Council on this issue through her Annual Report as well. We would be making a separate statement on this issue under the relevant agenda item later.

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Mr. President,

3. To conclude, we would like to express our appreciation for the work being done by the High Commissioner and her office. In particular, we take positive note of the fact that she has highlighted the issues of the Right to Development, the commemoration of Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the focus on International Year for People of African Descent in her introduction. We also thank her for her continued attention to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, especially gender equality and empowerment of women.

Thank you, Mr. President.
