

**PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**  
**20<sup>TH</sup> SESSION (18<sup>th</sup> June to 6 July 2012)**

**AGENDA ITEM 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Mr. Anand Grover and the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Mr. Kishore Singh**

**(19 June 2012)**

**Statement by India**

Madam President,

We thank the two Special Rapporteurs for their reports. We would first like to turn to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, which examines occupational health as an integral component of the right to health with a focus on the Informal economy. I commend him for drawing attention to this important aspect of health which is a growing concern in today's globalizing world, where industry and certain services have become truly global in character and workers are entering new professions and working with new technologies without being fully aware of their health implications. The role of the State and the international community is of paramount importance in creating this awareness. But their role does not stop here. They have to also provide the necessary health services, both through public health services and by creating the necessary enabling environment for the growth of health insurance services. The international community also has an obligation to assist countries in capacity-building.

2. India has a huge informal sector, which accounts for about 93% of the total workforce in India. Government is committed to regulate all economic activities for management of safety and health risks at workplaces and to provide measures so as to ensure safe and healthy

working conditions for every working man and woman in the nation and has accordingly worked out a National Policy on Safety Health and environment at work place.

3. India enacted the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 for providing social security to unorganised workers. The National Social Security Board was constituted in 2009 for formulation of social security schemes. A National Health Insurance Scheme for poor families, providing them health insurance cover of Rs. 30,000 (550 dollars) has been launched as a beginning in this. More than 22 million marginalized families have been covered at the end of last year. India is also constantly striving to enhance protection to its workers from exploitation during the process of recruitment and during their employment overseas, through bilateral agreements and a range of policies and schemes.

4. I now turn to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, which promotes quality education as an important constituent of the right to education. As the Special Rapporteur has pointed out, it is important to promote the right to education, both as an entitlement in terms of universal access to basic education and as empowerment in terms of acquisition of knowledge, skills, competencies and their quality. In this context, the Special Rapporteur has outlined aspects of a holistic conceptual framework for quality education and the main elements, norms and standards for quality education.

5. We appreciate that India's initiative to ensure good quality elementary education through the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 finds mention in the report. As the World Bank Education Specialist for India, Sam Carlson has observed, the Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion on the Government. Quality education is important for progress of a nation, empowering the individual and enabling a nation. We appreciate the Special Rapporteur's role in highlighting the need to promote adoption of norms at the national level establishing the right to quality education.

Thank you, Madam President.

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