

**AS DELIVERED**

**PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA**

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**13<sup>TH</sup> SESSION (1-26 Mar 2010)**

**General Segment**

**(3<sup>rd</sup> Mar 2010)**

**Statement by India**

Mr. President, High Commissioner for Human Rights, Excellencies,

We join the previous speakers in expressing our condolences to, and solidarity with, the people and the Government of Chile in this hour of tragedy and wish them well in their efforts of recovery and rehabilitation. Our appreciation to you for the able manner in which you have been steering the deliberations of the Council. We commend other members of the Bureau for the effective discharge of their responsibility in dealing with procedural and organizational matters of the Council. We take positive note of the commitment of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as her Office, in protection and promotion of human rights.

2. As a founder member of the United Nations, and as a liberal, secular democracy, India attaches considerable importance to the promotion and protection of human rights. Indeed, it has been a privilege for us to serve as a member of the Human Rights Council since its inception. Our approach in the Council has been guided by the firm belief that promotion and protection of human rights can be best pursued through dialogue and co-operation. The strength of the Council lies in its adherence to the principles of objectivity, transparency, non-selectivity, non-politicization and non-confrontation. We consider the Universal Periodic Review to be a good mechanism that enhances our commitment to making a genuine difference to the situation of human rights on the ground. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue

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to engage in a constructive and co-operative manner with all stakeholders with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of the Council.

3. As the Council nears the end of its fourth cycle, the formal task of the review of its work and functioning is also drawing near. We welcome the various informal initiatives in this regard, which have initiated stimulating discussions and shall, in turn, no doubt contribute towards a deeper understanding of different elements of the review so as to enrich the work of the Inter-Governmental Group.

4. At the same time, we must approach the review exercise with some caution. Its main objective should be the strengthening of the Council and making its functioning more effective. We should resist the temptation to fix what is not broken and to tamper with mechanisms that are working to satisfaction. Any review exercise must preserve the inter-governmental character of the Council mechanisms, recognize the primacy of national efforts in the realization of human rights and must not disturb the institution-building package of the Council.

5. From a substantive viewpoint, the review exercise should explore ways that preserve transparency and inclusiveness and ensure that while urgent human rights situations are addressed, duplication and overlap are avoided; streamline the number of resolutions tabled in each session; rationalize the work of the Council and the mandates of Special Procedures without in any way undermining our commitment to human rights; and make the dialogue between the Council and member states genuinely interactive. Similarly, for the UPR mechanism, it would be worthwhile to look into the challenges that the exercise has presented, such as the follow-up to recommendations, time-duration for each review and the modalities for inscription. We believe that the review offers an opportunity to address the relationship among the Council, the General Assembly, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and her Office, and the Treaty Bodies.

6. In conclusion, we take this opportunity to assure you of India's continued, active and constructive participation in the review process with a view to enhancing the performance of this body towards securing the fundamental rights and freedoms for all.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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