

**AS DELIVERED**

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

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

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

**Annual Full-day Meeting on the Rights to Child**

**(10<sup>th</sup> Mar 2010)**

**Statement by India**

Mr. President,

India welcomes the convening of an annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child. We take positive note of the topic chosen for discussion at this meeting, namely the fight against sexual violence against children.

2. India attaches considerable importance to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, our deep commitment being reflected in the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, relevant domestic legislations and our ratification of the Convention as well as its two Optional Protocols.

3. A concerted and coordinated effort is being made by our Ministry of Women and Child Development, the National Human Rights Commission and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights to protect children from sexual exploitation, abuse and violence. The National Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children 1998, is currently being updated to include emerging developments. A new Protocol on Pre-rescue, Rescue and Post-rescue operations for child victims of sexual exploitation, and *Ujjawala*, a comprehensive scheme ranging from Prevention of Trafficking to Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Violence, are measures that have been adopted in this regard. Three manuals outlining guidelines for police and judicial authorities, medical officers dealing with child victims and professionals providing counseling services for child survivors of trafficking have been formulated in collaboration with UNICEF. Additionally, state governments have been mandated to sensitize the lower level functionaries at cutting edge level, on issues related to sexual abuse or molestation, so that

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perpetrators of child abuse are severely dealt under the provisions of Indian Penal Code and other child-specific laws.

4. A substantial section of the comprehensive National Plan of Action for Children 2005 is devoted to protecting children from sexual abuse and violence. Its objectives include addressing the root causes of sexual abuse and exploitation of children, implementation of preventive strategies and provision of assistance to facilitate rehabilitation and social reintegration of child victims. It aims to criminalize, prosecute and penalize perpetrators effectively, while ensuring that the best interests of the child reign supreme. Further, it aims to enlist the support of the private sector, including the media, in programmes to prevent and combat sexual exploitation of children. To achieve these objectives, the Plan outlines setting up of Crisis Intervention Services Centres with adequately trained personnel to deal with child victims of abuse and creating quality foster care for victims.

5. India looks forward to gaining from the discussions held at this meeting, in particular the sharing of good practices, with a view to further strengthening child rights protection in India.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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