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PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
14TH SESSION (31 May-18 June 2010)

General Debate on High Commissioner's Update
(31 May 2010)

Statement by India

Mr. President,

We thank the High Commissioner, Ms. Navanethem Pillay, for her statement that provides a timely focus on some human rights themes and updates on specific situations. We appreciate in particular the attention paid by her to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that would be the subject of a UN summit in September 2010, and on the *Declaration on the Right to Development* whose 25th anniversary we shall be observing next year.

2. As noted by the UN Secretary-General in March 2010, MDGs are “the highest-profile articulation of internationally agreed development goals” and represent “the most important collective promise ever made to the world’s most vulnerable people”. With only five years to go to the target date, it is critical to undertake a rigorous and forward-looking review of the extent of achievement of these Goals by the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in September 2010, with a view to strengthen our collective efforts and adopt an action plan for the period 2011-‘15. As the report has noted, the current picture is one of a mixed and uneven success that needs additional momentum. Given its size and development trajectory, India is crucial to many of the MDG targets. Indeed, as part of our commitment to these targets, we have woven these targets into our last two five-year development plans which, in fact, set some of the development targets even more ambitious than MDGs. While we are in the process of compiling our latest national MDG report, our last year’s data indicate encouraging progress towards these targets. At the same time, many challenges still confront us and we remain committed to accelerating our development efforts. One of the important

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MDGs pertains to maternal health and mortality – an issue that is the focus of a panel discussion during the session, as also of the report of the Special Rapporteur on Health who visited India in November-December 2007. We would be highlighting some of the recent gains made in this area in our statement during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur later this week.

3. We also take positive note of the High Commissioner's effort to galvanize awareness on the 25th anniversary of the *Declaration on the Right to Development*. The *Declaration* confirmed the right to development as an inalienable human right and that equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative, both of nations and of individuals who make up nations. We look forward to working with all stakeholders to focus the deliberations on more effective realisation of the *Declaration's* vision.

4. Lastly, Mr President, after four years of membership, India would be finishing its term as a member of the Human Rights Council next month. It has been a privilege and an honour for us to have served on the Council, especially in its formative phase. We would like to thank all the UN member states, the High Commissioner, the Office of the High Commissioner and all other stakeholders for their support and cooperation. We would also like to thank you for your stewardship of the Council and assure you of our continued cooperation as the Council embarks on the delicate task of its own review.

Thank you, Mr President.
