

74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

**Agenda Item 65:
Report of the Human Rights Council**

**INDIA STATEMENT
By
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Mr. President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council for his report and for his briefing on the activities of the Council.

I would also like to convey our deep appreciation for the smooth and effective manner in which he has conducted the deliberations of the Council.

Mr. President,

Since its establishment thirteen years ago, the Human Rights Council has sought to overcome the problems faced by its predecessor the Human Rights Commission and, despite challenges, has been able to immensely contribute to promotion and protection of human rights globally.

India in its engagement with the discourse on human rights at the Council has always favored an inclusive and constructive approach based on dialogue, consultation and cooperation.

As member of the Council, India has always made efforts to ensure that the Council functions in an objective, non-selective, non-politicized, inclusive and transparent manner.

The unique and inclusive mechanism of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) has bolstered the credibility and effectiveness of the Council. We need to retain its universality and further improve its efficiency by rationalizing recommendations and by avoiding using it for imposing specific thematic issues that may not have acquired universal acceptance.

It is our firm belief that human rights issues cannot be approached in isolation, ignoring the complex and intricate relationship between human rights, development, democracy and international cooperation.

We will also work towards addressing constraints on national capacities to implement human rights obligations; instances of politicization of human rights; and; perceived intrusiveness beyond mandated activities – as these remain areas of concern.

Our efforts will be to find practical measures to protect and promote economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

Mr. President,

We believe that a more balanced geographical representation in all HRC bodies and mechanisms is necessary to promote objectivity and effectiveness. This will bring in diversity, grassroots knowledge and empathy, that in turn would contribute to constructive engagement with member states and other stakeholders.

While we appreciate the commitment of the High Commissioner towards increasing the diversity of the OHCHR staff, enhanced efforts are encouraged to achieve the broadest possible geographical diversity.

Mr. President,

Terrorism has emerged as one of the worst forms of violation of human rights. Despite terrorism being acknowledged as one of the foremost global challenges, any meaningful collective responses to address this menace continues remain elusive.

We appreciate the role of HRC in advocating a balanced approach that considers the impact of terrorism on the enjoyment of human rights while espousing international cooperation to combat the menace of terrorism.

We will continue to seek cooperation of all States to prevent any support from reaching terrorist groups, to deny terrorists safe havens and to extradite the perpetrators of terrorist acts or supporters.

We also request States to take all measures to address propaganda advocating hatred or misuse of Internet and other social media for spreading violent extremist ideologies fueling terror, thereby gravely threatening the human rights and human dignity of millions.

Mr. President,

Sky rocketing prices of life saving medicines, vaccines, and healthcare costs that push hundreds of millions into impoverishment every year, constitute a barrier for realization of all human rights.

We appreciate the significant contribution made by the HRC in recognizing access to medicines as a fundamental component of realizing the right to highest attainable standard of health.

We also need to place the human rights dimensions of access to medicines and vaccines at the center of our efforts to ensure the full realization of the health-related goals of Agenda 2030. We appreciate the Council's recent endeavors in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

As an ancient civilization of immense diversity and as the world's largest democracy, India has abiding faith in the spirit of multilateralism for effective realization of all human rights.

India's active engagement with the global human rights agenda dates back to the early days of the Commission on Human Rights and the drafting of the UDHR and other human rights treaties.

India's approach to human rights continues to evolve, as more rights become justiciable and through the process of progressive interpretation of laws by the judiciary.

Human rights considerations are deeply ingrained in the inclusive development efforts in India that has lifted millions out of poverty. Women's leadership and political participation, especially at the grassroots level, has played a pivotal role in this context. Our approach to realization of human rights globally, is inspired by our own experiences of being a pluralistic and vibrant democracy.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, we remain committed to bringing a pluralistic, moderate and balanced perspective to help build bridges across multiple divides in the human rights discourse and practice.

I thank you.