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INDIA STATEMENT

by

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First Secretary**

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Madam Chairperson,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Vojislav Suc, for his informative briefing.

The Human Rights Council, as an inter-governmental body, has the pivotal role within the international human rights mechanism.

Constituted of diverse Member States at different levels of developments, societal contexts and priorities, HRC is an invaluable institution.

70 years after adoption of the UDHR, the international human rights discourse remain contentious. The Human Rights Council, since its inception, as a successor to the Commission on Human Rights, has continued to grapple with ideological and political divides.

However, despite challenges, the Council has contributed significantly to human rights action and discourse over last 12 years.

Madam Chairperson,

The greater acceptance of recommendations emerging from Universal Periodic Review process is an encouraging trend which must be consolidated. We need to retain its universality, further improve its efficiency by rationalizing recommendations and by avoiding using it for imposing specific thematic discourses that have not yet acquired universal acceptance.

Providing technical assistance and capacity building to bridge the implementation gaps is also important.

Madam Chairperson,

Lack of consensus in Council's actions in situation-specific issues is a worrisome development, that compromises its effectiveness and credibility.

Adoption of aggressive and confrontational approach and overly intrusive methods, without consultation and consent of the country concerned have been counterproductive, leading only to politicization of human rights issues.

HRC must continue to strengthen its adherence to the fundamental principles of universality, transparency, impartiality, objectivity, non-selectivity and constructive dialogue for retaining its relevance and efficacy.

The Council should also ensure that the Special Procedures and the Treaty Body mechanisms adhere to these fundamentals while making their contributions.

The success of engagement with the Special Procedures depends upon their continued independence, impartiality and in their carrying out entrusted tasks with responsibility and sensitivity and in accordance with their mandates.

The number of Special Procedures is increasing since inception of the Council, leading to duplication of mandates. The process of selection of Special Procedure mandate-holders also needs more transparency.

Instances of mechanisms and Offices operating on their own, without any mandate and producing clearly biased documents only further harm the credibility of the United Nations.

The dependence of Council on voluntary funding is of continuing concern. Council needs to continue to rationalize its priorities of work, to make the most efficient use of the limited resources.

Madam Chairperson,

One of the Council's core responsibilities is to uphold the principles of indivisibility, interrelatedness and interdependence of all human rights, including the right to development.

The Council's approach needs to be balanced with due emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights including the right to development, aiming at greater inclusivity, participation and accountability through implementation of 2030 Agenda.

Madam Chairperson,

Terrorism is the most serious violation of human rights which emanates from beyond our borders. The international community must take resolute action against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, to prevent and stop abuse of human rights and fundamental freedoms of innocent people.

The Council also has a role in building consensus around the frontier issues such as protection of human rights in the cyberspace and impact of artificial intelligence, genetics and other emerging technologies on human rights.

Madam Chairperson,

Democracy in India is not just a system of governance, but an article of faith for all Indians, and also an inspiration for many around the world. Our experience demonstrates that a democratic pluralistic society with a secular polity, an impartial and independent judiciary, a vibrant civil

society, a free media and independent human rights institutions, provide for protection and promotion of human rights.

India has recently been elected to the Human Rights Council.

We remain committed to bring in pluralistic, moderate and balanced perspectives, to bridge multiple divides in human rights discourse and in action, within the Human Rights Council and beyond.

I thank you.