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Statement

by

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the Islamic Republic of Iran**

before

**the High Level Segment of
the Fourth Session of the Human Rights Council**

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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Louis De Alba for the exemplary, transparent and impartial manner in which he steered the work of the Council at this highly decisive and historical juncture.

Mr. President,

Allow me to commence with the fact that, we are all here to contribute to and facilitate the difficult process of institution-building within the Human Rights Council, and further, assist the successful completion of the mandate of Council for its first year.

The Commission on Human Rights, in its long journey and gradual development, provided invaluable lessons to be learnt. We must heed the lessons from its weaknesses and shortcomings emanated from the political manipulation. Overcoming these negative phenomenon require a shift in the culture of those involved in the promotion and protection of human rights.

The widely diagnosed maladies of the human rights machinery have been politicization, selectivity and double standard. Any condoning or failure to deal promptly with these deficiencies will indeed take us back to the same challenges experienced by the Commission.

Mr. President,

Now the question arises as to what should we do differently in the Council?

1- We should discard a confrontational approach by targeting countries on arbitrary basis which had become the insidious manifestation of politicization and double standard in the past.

2- We need to emphasize that human rights, democracy and freedom per se are basic principles and values but not good excuses to cover up illegal or unilateral wrong – doings.

3 - Based on internationally recognized norms and values, mechanisms of Human Rights Council should be able to address violation of all human rights in particular the right to life of innocent people living under foreign occupation with the disguise of defending democracy.

4- We should further underline that cooperation and dialogue will best serve the promotion and protection of human rights all over the world. And that mutual trust, understanding as well as due regard to national and cultural particularities are amongst the essential elements of any meaningful undertaking aimed at attaining the common goal.

Mr. President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran has actively participated in all deliberations of the Intergovernmental Working Groups on reviewing mandates and institution - building process. We re - emphasize the necessity of full observance of the principles of objectivity, impartiality, transparency and consensus – building in the work of the Council.

The Islamic Republic of Iran as a responsible and active member of the United Nations and based on divine teachings of Islam, has embarked on series of initiatives to help our institutions to stand up to current human rights challenges. These initiatives include inter- alia concrete measures in capacity building, reviewing the existing legislations and consolidating the civil society with the aim of creating a comprehensive and broad based structure to further promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this context we have managed to maintain and further develop the bilateral and multilateral dialogue with various countries in different regions, the latest round of which successfully took place with one of the European Partners in Tehran last month.

International cooperation and dialogue has always been the strategic approach in our foreign policy. We are of the firm view that pursuing such a policy by the Council can go a long way in strengthening our collective strive for achieving the common objectives of promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.

Mr. President,

Turning to the new developments within the institutional -building process for the Council, I should like to emphasis on the following points:

- The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism should be an important tool to strengthen the existing human rights machinery. We commend the positive achievements of the Working Group on UPR. Nevertheless, we are concerned over the relatively slow pace of progress with regard to the work of the other working groups.

- We are of the view that a predictable, transparent and balanced agenda requires inclusion of the concerns such as foreign occupation, further threat to occupy territory of Member States of the United Nations, rise in Islamophobia, stereotyping the Muslims and finally defamation of religions.
- Gross and systematic violation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories remains a matter of deep concern for the international community. The Council should continue to be seized of the consideration of the issue till the end of occupation. It should also fulfill its responsibility towards the elimination of the suffering of the Palestinian people.
- The delay in the implementation of the Council's decisions remains to be another cause of concern for the international community. The prompt address of which shall further enhance the credibility of the Council.

Mr. President,

We are convinced that the best approach to the timely fulfillment of the task entrusted upon the Council and avoiding the ambiguous circumstances is to ensure that the remaining time would be utilized in the most efficient manner towards the completion of the Council's mandate.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the Islamic Republic of Iran's determination to continue its constructive cooperation with all international actors and all relevant United Nations human rights institution for the promotion and protection of human rights all over the world. To this end, and as stated earlier we deem genuine dialogue and cooperation as the most appropriate and viable approach for its realization.

Thank you.