**Permanent Mission of India**

**Geneva**

Fourth Session of the Working Group on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas

(15-19 May 2017)

**(Statement of India)**

Excellency Madam Chair,

India welcomes convening of this important meeting on the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in the Rural Areas. We would like to join other delegates in congratulating you Madam Ambassador (Llanos, Permanent Representative of Bolivia) on your re-election as Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group.

India aligns itself with the statement delivered by Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In addition my delegation wishes to make the following in its national capacity.

It may be recalled that the Human Rights Council while responding to the recommendations of a study of the Advisory Committee in 2012, highlighted the human rights violations and discriminations suffered by peasants and other people working in rural areas, specifically in terms of hunger and poverty. To address this situation, the Advisory Committee recommended the ways and means to address the rights of peasants and other peoples working in rural areas.

India gives top priority to the protection of the rights of peasants and other people working in Rural Areas. Our national legislation ‘Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmer’s Rights, 2001 and other policies are effectively addressing the challenges in protecting the rights of farmers.

Madam Chair

My delegation supports this ongoing process. We would like to emphasize that the multiple rights enshrined in the draft declaration are both substantive and procedural in nature. Most of these rights, we believe, are borrowed from various other international human rights conventions/treaties which are already in force. However, so far as other substantive rights are concerned, we urge that the discussions on the draft declaration need to take into consideration the existing international obligations of the concerned states and their national priorities. This would encourage wider support to the draft declaration in its acceptance.

Finally, we thank the Secretariat for circulating a new revised draft declaration. My delegation will look forward to work constructively on draft Articles.

Thank you Madam Chair.