

**Statement by Mr Surya Deva
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**Online side event during the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council
“Special Procedures speaking with One Voice: Human Rights Experts Collective Action
and Statements”**

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Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

In my brief remarks, I would like to focus on the importance of UN mandate holders speaking in “one voice” and acting collectively on systemic human rights issues of common concern.

At the outset, we should always keep in mind that human rights are indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. The deep interlinkages between human rights have practical implications for how different independent experts – within the purview of their respective mandates – should collaborate to promote all human rights of everyone.

Let me take the example of equitable and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Is this an issue only within the remit of the Special Rapporteur on the right to health? The answer should be a clear no, as this issue implicates most if not all mandates. The same holds true for the need to recognise the right to a healthy environment, or the need to stop discrimination and violence against women or LGBTI persons.

In the same vein, if a State suppresses political dissent, the right to peaceful assembly, and the freedom of press on the pretext of national security, this will not only engage the mandates relevant to these specific human rights but also the

mandate, for example, of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. The reason is simple: if there is no civic space, business enterprises will not be able to conduct meaningful human rights due diligence and in turn discharge their independent responsibility to respect human rights under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

On behalf of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, I would like to take this opportunity to urge all States and businesses to stand up for human rights consistently, because in an interconnected world, it is increasingly becoming evident that threats to human rights anywhere is a threat to human rights everywhere. I will also encourage States to treat the UN mandate holders as “critical friends” to promote the realisation of human rights.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.