



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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ON BEHALF OF THE OIC**

**FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATION OF
ANNUAL REPORT BY MS. NAVANETHAM PILLAY,
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

**AT THE
TENTH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Geneva
5 March 2009**

Statement by Ambassador Zamir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, following the Statement by Ms. Navanetham Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights, to introduce her annual report, at the 10th Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 5 March 2009

Mr. President,

I am making this statement on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

We thank the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navanetham Pillay, for presenting her annual report. Her intention to hold regular briefings for the membership to share information on OHCHR's work is a welcome move. Regular interaction and streamlining of perspectives help achieve mutually desired aims in a more rapid and collaborative manner. In this regard, we recall and appreciate her pledge, made during the last session, to an open-ended, frank and mutually reinforcing interaction with the Human Rights Council as well as assurance to pursue impartiality and commitment to truth, with no tolerance for double standards or selective application.

The OIC together with the African group had proposed convening of a formal discussion on the relationship between the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR. While the OIC continues to support and uphold the independence of the High Commissioner, such a dialogue will help define and streamline the institutional relationship between the Council and the Office in accordance with the Resolution 48/141. Some work in the matter has been initiated in the form of a non paper that can be a good basis to carry this discussion forward.

The question of field presences is important. Its establishment and expansion should be balanced, appropriate, time bound and stem directly from the Council's mandates.

The UPR process acts as a catalyst for effective dialogue on human rights, helps create more awareness and expedites needed actions for the promotion and protection of human rights. Its intergovernmental nature mixed with the independent inputs from NGOs and treaty bodies makes it a comprehensive mechanism. It has served to enhance the credibility of the Council. We hope that the spirit of this peer review will be preserved to make honest assessments of human rights situation in countries together with sincere endeavours to redress existing deficits through cooperative efforts.

The OIC attaches importance to the independence and impartiality of the Treaty bodies and appreciates the continued support given by the OHCHR to improve and harmonize their working methods. In this regard provision of reliable and factual information is of crucial importance. Expertise of Special Procedures is also important to the work of the Council. We expect them to shun personal views or preferences, strictly follow their mandates and the Code of Conduct.

The OIC looks forward to the presentation of your report on the OPT for the year 2008 as well as periodic briefings on the activities of your office in the region.

Late submission as well as non availability of reports in all UN languages continues to seriously hinder the ability of member states to have an informed discussion with the Special Procedures. The report of the High Commissioner on the composition of the OHCHR staff is not ready yet. We hope it would contain detailed information that takes into account different categories of posts and their geographical distribution. The composition of OHCHR continues to reflect a serious imbalance and needs to be addressed in an equitable manner.

We appreciate the High Commissioner's constant efforts to promote the anti-racism agenda as well as to bridge differing views among member states on the issues of concern in the upcoming Review Conference. Our differences of opinion notwithstanding, we must be united in our common fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. As agreed, all concerns must be addressed within the ambit of DDPA.

We welcome the High Commissioner's renewed commitment to exploring the balance between freedom of expression and the need to curtail incitement to hatred, discrimination, hostility or violence. Continuation of seminars and discussions on regional level to examine and ensure compliance with both the Articles 19 & 20 of ICCPR, would help identify implementation gaps and possible effective remedies.

The core principle of the Universal Declaration is universality of all human rights. This principle must be upheld. The 60th anniversary of the UDHR was definitely an opportunity for all to reaffirm their commitment to promotion and protection of all human rights for all. We acknowledge your commitment and have faith that under your leadership this commitment will lead to further concrete actions.

The Council has done well in the last three years and all stake holders can take pride in the conduct of successful review of one third of the membership under UPR, review and rationalization of Special Procedures, ability to tackle urgent human rights situations through Special Sessions including addressing issues such as global food and financial crisis. These are important developments and speak of the credibility of the Council to deal with the issues of universal human rights. But there is no room for complacency. A lot still needs to be done to reach out to the right holders and protect their rights. It is a gigantic task and a joint undertaking. We must take this responsibility seriously to ensure a non-selective, impartial, and universal application of human rights across the world. We look forward to working with you to ensure success in this endeavour.

Madam High Commissioner, your report reminded us of the upcoming International Women's day. In this regard the OIC would like to echo your call to expedite efforts to overcome persisting discrimination and violence against women in all parts of the world.

I thank you, Mr. President.