

Statement by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group under Agenda item 4.4 entitled "Agenda and Framework for Programme of Work, Methods of Work and Rules of Procedure" at the IGWG on Review of the HRC

Geneva, 28 October 2010

Mr. President

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the African Group.

The African Group acknowledges that the methods of work of the Council largely derives from General Assembly resolution 60/251 which provides that the methods of work should be transparent, impartial, equitable, fair, pragmatic; lead to clarity, predictability and inclusiveness. The Council has also carefully negotiated and adopted its comprehensive agenda and framework for the programme of work based on similar principles.

Over the last five years, the Council has lived up its expectation by way of utilizing its full range of tools to address human rights situations and make contributions towards establishment of international human rights norms. As a departure from much criticized ways of the former Commission on Human Rights, the Council has held a number of thematic special sessions.

Indeed, no system is perfect and none can be expected to be so within a matter of just five years. To expect the Council to work miracles is worse than wishful thinking. After all, the Council is no more and no less than the totality of its membership - that is to say, what the Council is or is not is merely a reflection of its constituent parts which are essentially the UN Member States. The success or failure of any system is bound to the attitude and disposition of its members. If we complain that the Council has not done enough, we are merely saying that the Member States have fallen short of their commitments. And if we say that it has passed the test and has done admirably, it is a pass mark granted to the Member States!

Having said that, Mr. President, the African Group would like, in the context of Agenda, Programme of Work, Methods of Work and Rules of Procedure for consideration of the Working Group, to submit the following proposals:

- 1) Maintain the 10-item agenda structure, which provides opportunity for all human rights issues to be discussed in the Council's framework,
- 2) Council should continue to meet for ten weeks in accordance with UNGA resolution 60/251 but to rationalize the sessions as follows:
  - Firstly, two main sessions to be convened, each of a 4 weeks duration, the first being in February/March and the second in September/October;

12) The Bureau shall maintain a strictly procedural and organizational role in line with the rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure,

13) We recommend the establishment of a special funding mechanism aimed at empowering small delegations, in particular those from Small and Vulnerable Economies and Least Developed Countries, to participate more effectively in the proceedings of the Human Rights Council.

In conclusion, the African Group fully supports the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the NAM.

I thank you.