

Statement by Bangladesh Delegation following new High Commissioner's address at the 9th
Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 8 September 2008

Mr. ~~Chairman~~, *President*,

Allow me to join previous speakers in welcoming Madam Navanethem Pillay, the new UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to this Council. We attach great importance to ~~the position of~~ *the position* ~~the High Commissioner~~ in promoting and protecting human rights. High Commissioners have ~~always~~ played ~~an~~ important role, ~~in the past~~ in upholding human rights. Madam Pillay has all the requisite qualifications, qualities and background required ~~to~~ *ably* carry forward the works of her predecessors. She comes from the front line of the human rights movement. With all ~~these~~ *her rich* experience, dedication and commitment to human rights and justice, we have no doubt that M. Pillay will be successful in this new and important capacity. ~~We look forward to close work~~ *looking* ~~cooperation with Ms Pillay.~~

Mr. President
We are celebrating 60th anniversary of the UDHR this year. The core principle of the Universal Declaration which has been reaffirmed in the Vienna Declaration ~~in 1993~~ *15 yrs ago* is that all human rights are equal, indivisible and interrelated. This principle must be upheld. Necessary action should be undertaken to ensure that human rights are strengthened and advanced in a practical and effective manner avoiding politicization and double standards. As the Council strives to correct regrettable discrepancy between ~~two~~ *civil political and economic-social* groups of human rights and to level the human rights playing field, the OHCHR has also the responsibility to guarantee equal emphasis to ~~these in their~~ *then two groups in its* programmes and actions. *We have heard reassuring words from Madam Pillay in her vision statement. We thank her for that.*

Mr. President
Ms Pillay has taken responsibility at a time when the institution building works of the premium human rights body, HRC has been almost completed. The Office itself has been transformed, budget doubled, global outreach expanded. It is time that ~~we~~ *we so in implementation mode and* start accruing benefits from all ~~these~~ *positive* developments.

The decisions of HRC are on most part vested on the HC's Office to implement on the ground. As such, enhanced interaction between these two bodies would be of utmost importance. We appreciate her pledge to ~~an open-ended~~ frank and reciprocally reinforcing interaction with the Human Rights Council. We believe that human rights will be benefitted from such close interaction and harmonious actions between the Human Rights Council and the High

Commissioner. The founding resolution 48/141 rightly envisioned ~~this aspect~~ ^{such} As such it reads, ~~the High Commissioner for Human Rights is the United Nations official with principal responsibility for United Nations human rights activities, within the framework of the overall competence, authority and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council.~~ Even then, ~~if there is any structural or developmental anomaly,~~ ^{that hinders such interaction} ~~we should not shy away from dealing with that for the larger benefit of human rights protection.~~ ^{reflecting on that aspect goal of fostering} Our intention is not to impinge on the independence ^(or neutrality) of the Office, or its functioning, ~~but to play a~~ ^{cooperating} ~~an advisory, promotional role.~~ ^{and some of us are concerned about.}

On the field activities, ^{of OHCHR} we would emphasize on greater understanding of the local situation, ^{legal system,} like socio-economic conditions, ^{in dealing with the Govt.)} customs and cultures. ^{dialogue not} ~~(Cooperation not confrontation, or coercion with the governments)~~ should be ^{the} order of the game. At the end of the day, human rights in a given country can not be improved without active ^{involvement} ~~engagement~~ and action of the Governments. ~~Indeed,~~ ^{engagement} the most effective way to safeguard human rights is often to strengthen the capabilities of national governments, ~~in developing countries~~

Realization of right to development assumes particular importance in the context of pervasive poverty and marginalization as ^{side} an effect of globalization. Extreme poverty is an affront to human dignity. It is the cause and consequence of violation of many human rights. ^{in our view,} Protection of fundamental human rights of the poor can best be served ^{by dealing with the root causes and} through bringing them out of poverty, through developmental approach.

~~Concerns~~ ^{we are} about the ~~unsatisfactory progress made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in addition to~~ the current food crisis and the pressing humanitarian demands generated by natural disasters, ^{There is a} ~~highlight the~~ need for a comprehensive articulation of fundamental human rights, including the right to life, to security, to food, health and shelter, so as to make explicit the obligations of governments, individually and collectively, and to move from a culture of charity to a culture of entitlements and international solidarity, ^{as former High Commissioner Luis Arboles once said.} Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge facing the world today. It threatens the life, livelihood, food security, health and housing of millions of people in the world. The impact is very real and visible. ~~The governments must respond to the impacts by all necessary means.~~ ^{The developing countries particularly the LDCs are disproportionately affected by climate change. They} Climate change is a global issue and as such demands a global response. As we address broader issue ~~globally and deal with its root causes, we also need to take measures locally and regionally to mitigate the~~ ^{have much lower capacity to cope with these adverse impacts.} OHCHR is doing some studies. We would urge on the High Com. for greater attention to this issue of climate change which affects enjoyment of human rights in every possible way.

~~impact of climate change.~~ The developing countries remain disproportionately affected by climate change. These are the countries generally more exposed to disasters, drought and desertification. They have also much lower capacity to cope with these adverse impacts. ~~International community has a moral obligation to support these nations adapt and mitigate affects of climate change.~~

We agree with Madam High Commissioner that
~~We need to explore the balance between freedom of expression so as to enhance protection against incitement to hatred, particularly against religion.~~ We must develop a better understanding of the permissible limitations to freedom of expression by taking into account the mandatory prohibition of advocacy of religious hatred, ~~that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.~~

Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic origin, color or creed has long been identified as a prevalent and odious form of exclusion. This discrimination and all related forms of intolerance must continue to be forcefully combated as prescribed in the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action. ~~We all have a common agenda to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.~~ The forthcoming Durban Review Conference provides an opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved and what needs to be done for further progress and to deal with contemporary forms of racism. The process would benefit from ~~active participation by all; and therefore those who have declined to attend should reconsider their decisions.~~ The continued pursuit of narrow parochial political agendas represents the greatest impediments to the full realization of many rights. *the contribution of Madam Pillay, who herself fought racism and apartheid throughout her life.*