

Please check  
against delivery

Mr. SHAFQAT ALI KHAN

**Draft Statement by Pakistan on behalf of the OIC Member States during the First session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the Review of the Work and Functioning of the Human Rights Council under Agenda item 3 entitled "General Discussion on the Work and Functioning of the Council in accordance with the mandate under OP 16 of the UNGA Res. 60/251" (25 October 2010, Geneva)**

Mr. President

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Conference. The OIC Member States subscribe to the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the NAM.

I would like to extend to you felicitations on behalf of the member states of the OIC on chairing the Inter-Governmental Working Group on review of the Human Rights Council. The OIC countries have full confidence that under your leadership we will be able to fine-tune the work and functioning of the Council in line with the mandate given to the Council in OP16 of UNGA resolution 60/251.

The OIC attaches utmost importance to the promotion and protection of human rights as defined in a number of international human rights instruments. The OIC countries derive this inspiration from the tenets of Islam, which emphasizes the realization of human rights for all human beings without any discrimination.

Mr. President

In OP 16 of UNGA resolution 60/251, the UNGA decided to review the work and functioning of the Council within the five years of its establishment. We believe that the task before us is quite clear. We expect that the ongoing review exercise to be confined to a fine-tuning of the work and functioning of the Council. Any calls to reform, overhaul or link the performance of the Council with its mandate are premature and unwarranted and fall outside the purview of what the UNGA has mandated us to do.

The OIC welcomed the establishment of Human Rights Council in 2006 and expected that the Council would guide the international human rights system based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue to promote and protect human rights and ensure fair and just treatment for all. Thus the Council provided the international community a historic opportunity to extricate human rights from the bitter past legacy of confrontation and politicization of the Commission times.

Mr. President

The OIC notes with satisfaction that despite challenges the Council has performed better than the Commission in its limited history. The most significant achievement, among others, was the review of the human rights situation of more than 120 States, which enabled them to improve their human rights record consistent with their national priorities and international obligations. The Universal Periodic Review has been a success because as a mechanism it has ensured equal treatment for all States. We are all measured by the same yardstick.

Mr. President

The challenges being faced by the Council today don't pertain to the work and functioning of the Council but are primarily political in nature. A lack of political commitment at the part of States to work on the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity has restricted the capacity of this Council to deliver at its best. We must avoid double standards and work on the basis of cooperation and a positive and constructive dialogue instead of indulging in unnecessary naming and shaming. We believe that it is necessary to take a thematic approach to human rights violations rather than a country specific one in addressing egregious violations of human rights. It is important to remember that the main reason between the polarisation and divisiveness that had come to characterise the debates in the CHR was this very trend to target specific countries. We must do our utmost to prevent the discussions in the Council from going down the same path.

Mr. President

The OIC's call for cooperation and dialogue is not meant to create a culture of impunity and acquiescence to the gross and consistent violations of human rights. What we are asking for are strengthened international efforts to foster a global dialogue for the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace at all levels, based on respect for human rights and for diversity.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the OIC wishes all the best to the Working Group in its deliberations and we assure you of our fullest cooperation.

I thank you.

\*\*\*