Ms. MARIAM AFTAB

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 4.1 entitled "Discussion on UPR including the presentation on concrete proposals", (26 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.

At the outset, let me convey that the OIC Member States fully support the proposals made in the NAM Position Paper on Review of the Council.

As a new mechanism in the work of the international human rights machinery, Universal Periodic Review is an effective way to reduce selectivity and political targeting. The human rights record of more than 120 countries has been measured by the same yardstick over the period of the last three years. By providing an objective review through constructive engagement with the States, this mechanism has made a valuable contribution in realizing a new approach of extending the same treatment to all States in the work of the Council. The Universal Periodic Review has been a success because as a mechanism it has ensured equal treatment for all States.

The UPR has been a catalyst for governments to bring positive changes in legislation, policy and practice. This mechanism has encouraged States to improve their human rights record consistent with their national priorities and international obligations.

Mr. President

The OIC Member States would like to submit the following proposals in the context of the UPR mechanism for consideration of the Working Group;

a) The UPR is United Nations member-driven an inter-governmental process. The primacy of its inter-governmental nature must be preserved,

b) The basis of the review as well as principles and objectives of the UPR as agreed in the IB Package must be preserved,

c) The Council should develop drafting guidelines for the two documents, prepared by the OHCHR.

d) There shall be a separate session of two weeks to adopt the reports of the UPR Working Group as well as to hold a General Debate under Agenda Item 6.

f) The second/subsequent UPR cycle shall be extended to 5 years,

g) Order of the review shall be maintained in subsequent cycles,

h) One year break between first and second cycles shall be given to the States in order to settle procedural issues,

i) The second/subsequent cycle should mainly focus on reviewing current developments in addition to follow-up the recommendations made in the first/preceding cycle which enjoyed the support of the State under Review along with the voluntary pledges and commitments,

j) There is need to strengthen the resources of UPR Voluntary Trust Fund enabling the effective participation of developing countries particularly the least developed countries in different stages of the UPR process,

k) Modalities to be finalized at the earliest to operationalize the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance,

l) The next cycle of review should include an assessment of the adequacy of assessment received from the international community enabling the State under Review to implement the accepted recommendation,

Mr. President

The OIC has carefully submitted these proposals, taking into account that such proposals only pertain to fine-tuning the work and functioning of the Council.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the UPR mechanism, though in its evolutionary stage, has made a difference on the ground. It has triggered States to take substantive steps to promote and protect human rights of their citizens. Therefore, the basics, objectives and principles of this mechanism must be preserved by the Council during the review of its work and functioning.

I thank you.