

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Morteza Sarmadi

Vice- Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran

at the High Level Segment of the 25th Session of the
Human Rights Council

Please check against delivery

Geneva, March 6, 2014

In the Name of God, the Compassionate the Merciful

Mr. President,

Honorable Ministers and Heads of Delegations,

Madam High Commissioner,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a distinct honor and pleasure for me to address, on behalf of my government, this High Level Segment of the Human Rights Council. The Islamic Republic of Iran has been actively engaged in the process of establishing the Council and throughout its work as part of our dedication to the promotion of human rights and dignity across the globe

Mr. President,

In June 2013, people of Iran elected a new government through a democratic presidential election. The new government, declared its commitment, on the basis of the

provisions of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its international obligations, to fulfill its promises to promote aspirations of its people. The government has also reaffirmed its primary responsibility to promote civil, economic, political, social and cultural rights despite obstacles hindering its progress resulting from *inter alia* the illegal and unlawful sanctions imposed against my country. To that end and in continuation of what has been done in the past, a "Charter on Citizens' Rights" has been initiated, the draft of which was published to be reviewed and commented by all interested Iranians before taking its final and legal form. Furthermore and with respect to economic and social rights, a number of short and mid-term programs have been developed within the framework of the "20 Year-Vision Program" of the country.

Mr. President

Human rights should be seen as a common heritage of humanity which have been initiated and developed by valuable contributions of all civilizations and cultures. Basic principles

and components of human rights such as non-discrimination, justice, equality and due process of law are necessary prerequisites for every society seeking prosperity and welfare of its citizens.

Iran's commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights is deeply rooted in its rich historical, religious and cultural heritage. We are determined to positively contribute, at both national and international levels, to promote human rights based on constructive dialogue and cooperation with Member States as well as with the UN mechanisms. It is against this background that our people insist that an impartial, balanced and non-political approach be taken by the international community including the United Nations human rights mechanism that factually and realistically considers the human rights developments in the Iranian society.

Mr. President,

The UN General Assembly, in its 68th session, on the basis of a proposal made by H.E. President Rouhani, has adopted a resolution entitled "A world against violence and violent

extremism". The Human Rights Council should, in my view, take stock of the potentials inherent in that resolution and build on the innovative ways designed to combat different forms of extremism and violence. The General Assembly in this resolution "recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach to countering violent extremism and addressing the conditions conducive to its spread". The HRC is invited to utilize this momentum to further identify various covert and overt forms of extremism and violence. This objective can be realized through defining a plan of action so as to combat this growing menace that undermines the realization of human rights. Apart from terrorism which claims innocent lives of peoples around the globe, other manifestations of this sinister phenomenon such as war, militarization and coercive economic sanctions should also be addressed since they are challenging the integrity and development of human societies.

To ensure a coherent application of universal human rights, the relevant UN machineries including the Human Rights Council need to develop such process that does not allow for a

non-politicized, non-selective and impartial performance of the work of the Council. Any attempt for advancing political purposes of few runs counters to the cause of human rights. Clearly, such practice will be again opposed by overwhelming majority of international community who did not consciously support similar move in the past.

Double standards lead the Human Rights Council nowhere, but only squander the Council's resources that should otherwise be channeled for capacity building at the grass root level. Mechanisms such as UPR, that we all know, emerged from the collapse of the highly politicized former Commission on Human Rights as a workable solution, should be strengthened. The UPR constitutes a unique instrument since it is the sole mechanism which considers the human rights situation in all UN member states equally, without discrimination. First UPR report of Iran was presented in 2010, and we are preparing the second report to be considered in October this year.

Mr. President,

Gross violation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories remains a matter of deep concern for all. The occupation, apart from being the source of successive gross and systemic violations of fundamental principles of human rights, is, *per se*, in clear breach of the basic right to self-determination. Policy of settlements constitutes a gross violation perpetrated by occupying forces. Confiscation of Palestinian lands and many other types of violation of the Palestinian rights such as targeted killing of Palestinians and state terrorism run contrary to the most established principles of humanity, the purposes and principles of the Charter, 1949 Geneva Conventions as well as International Human Rights Law.

In Bahrain, we are facing with a worsening situation of human rights through suppression of the peaceful assembly, violation of freedom of expression, arbitrary and illegal detention of political and human rights activists, torture and ill treatment of prisoners, all of which require close attention by Human Rights Council and the international community. The

Bahraini government is misusing this august body to make unfounded allegations against others, rather than providing necessary information on the improvement of the situation of human rights in his country.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me underline that the paramount approach to promote and protect human rights across the globe is to engage in a meaningful and genuine interaction and cooperation, taking into account historical and cultural backgrounds of every member states. We look forward to continuing our close cooperation with the Council's member states to realize our objectives of greater global prosperity, justice and equity for all people of the world.

Thank you, Mr. President.