EOV on behalf of the EU on draft resolution L39. presented by the President on the review of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the EU Member States that are members of the Human Rights Council. This explanation of vote has been agreed by the EU as a whole.

We would like to thank you and the facilitators for your tireless efforts throughout the Review process. The European Union has attached great importance to the review of the work and functioning of the HRC. We saw the review an opportunity to increase the Council's capacity to have an impact on the ground and to deal with situations of concern and human rights emergencies.

However, we note with disappointment that our level of ambition was not shared by all delegations. Despite all our efforts and the engagement of many other delegations, the outcome of the review remained minimal as we were not able to achieve substantial improvements in any area of the work and functioning of the Council, in particular with regard to respond to urgent and chronic human rights emergencies in a tailored way.

We deeply regret that it has been impossible to strengthen flexible and light work formats, such as informal meetings and briefings. We remain convinced that the convening of informal meetings by the HRC President, upon information coming from stakeholders can give the Council the opportunity to discuss human rights emergencies in a constructive and cooperative manner.

We made a number of proposals aimed at making the overall system of special procedures more efficient, with special focus on co-operation by States that clearly needs improvement. The text put forward by the Facilitator - the ambassador of Finland - contained valuable suggestions in this regard and we regret that are not part of the outcome document.

Regarding the UPR, it is essential that the State under review clearly indicates which recommendations it accepts and which recommendations it rejects, as this is an essential prerequisite for a meaningful discussion and follow-up. We do feel that it is important that there is a solution for the speakers list, which has been a cause of much discontent in the past.

UPR has the potential to make a difference on the ground. The focus of the second cycle should be on implementation; and in this context we recognize the importance of providing technical assistance in order to help states implement UPR recommendations. We remain convinced, however that this can only be done in an effective way when countries provide an implementation plan for their accepted recommendations.

Taking into consideration the significance of having a consensual outcome on such an important issue which is going to determine the future work of the most important human rights body of the UN, the European Union decided to join consensus on the outcome document although we felt that it fell short of expectations.

We do hope that there will be other opportunities to discuss and implement some of the good ideas that were raised in the course of the review, and which are in line with the clear mandate given to the Council in GA resolution 60/251. In this vein, we call on all states to make a better use than so far of existing tools of this Council. We for our part are committed to continue our engagement with all partners to this end. Now that Geneva's role in the HRC has concluded, we pass the baton to the General Assembly to consider our report and to conclude their own track of work.

With regard to L39 we would like to thank the President for his efforts in bringing delegations together and for his willingness to take up some of our proposals. However, we have to put on record our dissatisfaction with certain parts of the draft. The EU is strongly of the view that it is not up to the HRC, as a subsidiary body, to prescribe to the GA how to deal with this outcome document. We strongly regret that the report of the open-ended working group is not going to be included as an annex of the resolution and will only be available in the GA as a reference document in the course of the negotiations in NY. In light of the above mentioned facts, and considering the importance of securing the broadest possible support on this initiative the European Union is able to join consensus.

Thank you Mr. President.