Mr. President,

My delegation would like to thank the President of the Human Rights Council for her presentation as well as the report of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 64.

Mr. President,

The Human Rights Council established by the international community in 2006 has strengthened the efforts to promote and protect human rights globally.

We are encouraged by the broad consensus that the Human rights Council has been able to achieve and address human rights issues in a more constructive manner and has been a considerable improvement over its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights.

This has been achieved in large measure, we believe, due to the non-selective and transparent approach by the Human Rights Council in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

The Human Rights Council has been able to take stock of recent human rights situations expeditiously through greater frequency of meetings and provision of special sessions and has laid more emphasis towards dialogue, cooperation and capacity building.

Mr. President,
We welcome the successful completion of the Review process in which India actively participated. Mr. Gopinathan Achamkulangare, Permanent Representative of India to the UN Offices in Geneva was the facilitator on issues relating to the Agenda and the Framework for a Programme of work.

This review process of the work and functioning of the Human Rights Council after 5 years of its functioning has provided a road map to further streamline the Council's work methods and functioning, including in the areas of the UPR process and the appointment of the Special Procedures, as reflected in the outcome document, adopted by the General Assembly at its 65th Session.

We must consciously ensure that the Council continues to function in a non-selective, non-politicized and transparent manner.

Mr. President,

We consider the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to be a positive, universal, transparent mechanism with participation of all stakeholders directly or indirectly that enhances our commitment to making a genuine difference to the improvement of human rights on ground. The first UPR Cycle with review of all the 193 States of the UN was successfully completed in October 2012.

The UPR process has also generated a new momentum towards ratification of core international human rights instruments, submission of periodic reports to treaty bodies, better cooperation with special procedures, and greater openness towards human rights complaints procedures.

We also acknowledge the important role played by treaty bodies in monitoring the implementation of the treaty obligations by the state parties. Recommendations made and best practices identified by these bodies have strengthened domestic legal regimes and assisted governments in capacity building in the area of human rights. The UPR has enhanced the visibility and utility of the recommendations by treaty bodies and special procedures.

Mr. President,

We welcome the practice of the presentation of the report of the Human Rights Council in the General Assembly directly, where its recommendations are considered and acted upon by the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly.

We must also ensure more streamlined mechanisms and procedures so that the decisions of the General Assembly on the report of the Council, especially those with financial implications, can be considered quickly by ACABQ and the Fifth Committee to minimize delays.

Mr. President,
As a State Party of the principal covenants on human rights, and of practically all other major human rights instruments, India has accorded equal importance to all human rights. India has consistently promoted civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. While the Constitution of India is the bedrock of our legal and political system, India’s independent judiciary, a free and vibrant media and civil society have reinforced these safeguards to ensure that human rights for our citizens are not denied.

Mr. President,

India remains committed to making the Human Rights Council a strong, effective and efficient body capable of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. We believe that the work of the Human Rights Council should be guided by an approach based on dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding. We reiterate our firm commitment to continue to engage constructively with all Member States, and strive to ensure that the Council retains its pre-eminent place in the international human rights arena.

Thank you, Mr. President.