

SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION : Mr Sam Kotane

Mr President

South Africa has taken careful note of the excellent report by the Special Rapporteur, on the right to health. We support and concur with the recommendations that he has made in his report.

Prof Hunt makes reference to South Africa's Constitution which includes a Bill of Rights, which recognises the right of access to health care services. In this regard, South Africa is required to achieve the progressive realisation of this right within its available resources.

Recognising the undue disease burden placed on South Africa, which is a developing country, we have made significant strides to address in particular, in a progressive manner, the needs of the most vulnerable groups of our society namely women, children and the elderly.

Mr President,

My delegation also shares Prof Hunt's profound concern about the situation that prevails in Iraq, in particular the intolerable health situation faced by Iraqis who are displaced in vast numbers inside their own country (estimated 2 million), as well as those finding themselves as refugees outside Iraq (also estimated 2 million).

My delegation therefore calls on the Human Rights Council to find a constructive approach to deal with this matter.

In addition to this, my delegation also shares Prof. Hunt's assessment of the serious impact on the delivery of health services to the Palestinian people, caused by Israel's withholding of funds to the Palestinian Authority as well as the withholding of donor funds caused by the sanctions imposed on the Palestinian Authority. We therefore urge all parties, in particular the donors to consider carefully the inconsistency of their actions in this region, taking into account their human rights approach in other parts of the world, where upholding civil and political rights and the freedom of expression is of primary concern.

My delegation therefore urges the Human Rights Council to adequately address the plight of health-care and health services of the Palestinian people.

I thank you.