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Statement

**by H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of
the Russian Federation**

**at the high-level segment of the
25th session of the UN Human Rights Council**

(Geneva, 3 March, 2014)



Last year Russia was once again elected member of the United Nations Human Rights Council by an overwhelming majority. We appreciate this support which we view as an acknowledgement of our country's constructive approach to this sphere of multilateral cooperation.

For the Russian Federation, the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms is a basic priority enshrined in its Constitution. As President Vladimir Putin has stressed, the relevant provisions of Russia's fundamental law establishing these rights and freedoms are unalterable. We continue to work on developing civil society and improving the standards of living of our people.

The protection of human rights has come to the top of the international agenda. In a situation when the factors of instability in the global development remain strong, the high-risk and conflict areas in different regions of the world are expanding. These processes are strongly related to a new polycentric world order that is emerging. The Russian Federation has consistently maintained that at the time of profound changes every effort must be undertaken so that the rights and freedoms of the individual are ensured and that human dignity is respected in practice.

Human rights is too serious a matter to be used either as a bargaining chip in geopolitical games, or a means of imposing one's will on others, not to mention as a pretext for regime-change operations. As experience shows, military interventions on the pretext of civilian protection produce the opposite effect, compounding the sufferings of innocent civilians and depriving them of a fundamental human right, the right to life.

All internal crises should be overcome without external interference, through dialogue between all political forces, ethnic and religious groups, in accordance with constitutional norms and in compliance with international obligations, including, not least, those under international humanitarian law and those related to human rights and the rights of minorities. At the same time it is

critically important to dissociate ourselves from extremists who seek to illegally gain control over the situation not shunning violence and open terror.

The said approaches to internal conflict settlement may be applied to Syria, Ukraine and any other country of the world.

Real progress in the international community human rights activities can be achieved only on the basis of equitable cooperation, mutually respectful dialogue and enhanced confidence between States. Indeed, it is the State as the guarantor of law in its territory that bears main responsibility for the protection of human rights.

In order to be effective, consolidated efforts aimed at promoting and protecting human rights should be undertaken in strict compliance with the universally recognized norms and principles of international law, primarily the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other fundamental instruments adopted by the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

However, no country or group of countries have exclusive powers to unilaterally create certain “norms of conduct” not relying on a universal basis. Imposing one’s own interpretation of the human rights standards on others can only aggravate intercultural and inter religious tensions, cause a conflict of civilizations and undermine efforts aimed at creating a stable system of global governance.

A number of countries have recently seen a sudden and sometimes rather aggressive rise in the activities of those who support ultra-liberal ideas, advocating permissiveness and hedonism and demanding a revision of norms of morality and ethics shared by all world religions. Such activities are destructive for society and extremely harmful for the younger generation. Children should be protected from information that is damaging for their personality and degrading. In this regard I would like to stress once again that the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulate that the

exercise of certain rights and freedoms may be restricted by law in the interest of the protection of public health and morals, public safety and public order.

We have consistently advocated that traditions and cultural and historical background of peoples should be taken into consideration. We emphasize the importance of the HRC resolution reaffirming that a better understanding and appreciation of traditional values contributes to promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In its further work, the Council should ensure that attention is given to all categories of rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural, as well as the right to development.

We believe that it is necessary to strengthen and develop the legal framework on human rights. To this end, we will propose a draft resolution "Integrity of the judicial system" and expect others to support it.

As information and communication technologies develop rapidly, close attention should be paid to the impact of virtually unlimited access to and exchange of information. The recently discovered facts bring up important questions, for example that of whether the extent of interference into individuals' private lives and the government's control over the media is reasonable in terms of security tasks.

When discussing human rights in the context of the Internet, in addition to the freedom of speech one should also consider the respect of other rights, including the right to privacy and the right to intellectual property. We expect that after the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution 68/167 "The right to privacy in the digital age" practical work on coordinating clear rules of conduct in these spheres will begin.

This year the international community is to mark the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the World War II and next year – the 70th anniversary of the Victory over Nazism and the establishment of the Nuremberg Tribunal. That

should remind us of the terrible consequences of one's belief in their exclusiveness and neglect of fundamental norms of law and morality.

We should be firm and united in our efforts to oppose the attempts to justify and glorify the Nazis and their accomplices and to desecrate monuments to those who liberated Europe from the "brown plague". The rejection of misanthropic ideology by most countries was manifested through the support the overwhelming majority of the UN Member States gave to the UNGA resolution 68/150 on combating glorification of Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

A week ago in Sochi the international community demonstrated, in contrast to this disgraceful behavior, its commitment to the principles of the Olympic Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thanks to the athletes from some 88 countries the world saw a celebration of our openness to each other that took place in the atmosphere of friendship, trust and tolerance and contributed to the strengthening of humanitarian ties. In a few days, the Paralympic Winter Games will start. We hope that the Council will unanimously adopt resolution "Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal".

The concept of human rights in itself has a powerful uniting potential. Dignity, liberty, justice, equality and tolerance towards others should strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation between States and peoples for the purpose of ensuring sustainable development and prosperity of the whole mankind.