



PERMANENT MISSION OF AZERBAIJAN

STATEMENT
by Ambassador Elchin Amirbayov,
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

General Segment
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Mr. President,

Today, almost three years after the establishment of the Human Rights Council we can already make certain assessment of its record to day, including achievements attained and challenges that are still there.

Obviously, there is still a lot to be done but the atmosphere that has prevailed in the Council's deliberations gives us all a solid hope to look into the future with optimism.

Last year was marked by the commencement of work of **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** mechanism. Considerable work has been done and a milestone approached so we can glance back at what we have done so far. 64 countries including mine have already been reviewed during the first four sessions of the Working Group on UPR.

This experience provides us with the opportunity to make first evaluations of this unique mechanism. It is encouraging that UN human rights system managed, for the first time, to create a mechanism for reviewing, questioning and assessing the human rights situation in all countries of the world in a cooperative and non-confrontational manner.

We all should agree that this new review mechanism has a number of advantages over similar mechanisms. Principles of universality, cooperation and equal treatment as well as full involvement of States under Review attracts much broader interest to this mechanism while in the past issues of consideration of the human rights situation in particular country was considered as politically motivated and mostly rejected by latter.

This process is, indeed, a testimony to the willingness of all countries, non-governmental organizations and National Human Rights Institutions to cooperate both at the national and international levels for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

UPR may have some deficiencies as well and those should be discussed and addressed in a collegial and cooperative spirit through our joint efforts. We think the comprehensive assessment of the UPR mechanism and its ability to make a difference in promoting human rights in each and every corner of the world will be possible as we will embark upon the examination of the follow-up of this process, which is a key aspect of UPR and is directly linked to the first objective of UPR: the improvement of the human rights situation on the ground.

Being also reviewed under UPR mechanism Azerbaijan highly values the constructive comments and useful recommendations given to it which surely will contribute to the promotion and protection of all human rights in Azerbaijan.

Another mechanism of the Human Rights Council that has started its activity is **Advisory Committee**. This body is guided by independent, objective, transparent approach which is so crucial for effective and non-selective activity of the Council and thus its credibility. This Delegation counts on the Advisory Committee's positive role and constructive contribution to the future work of the Human Rights Council.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Azerbaijan is fully committed to the universality, interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights. We should avoid engaging in setting up an hierarchy among the human rights.

Rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, refugees, IDP's and etc. should be always on the radar of international community to fulfill noble goal of ensuring of all human rights for all.

Adherent to this understanding and as a traditional sponsor of **the resolution on missing persons** we note with great satisfaction the continued attention given by the Council to this important issue. We strongly believe that the rights of thousands of victims of these violations committed during armed conflicts occurring in different parts of the world should be ensured and voices of the members of their families wishing to obtain any information on whereabouts of their loved ones should be heard. The core idea behind this initiative is also to emphasize that the human rights should be protected in all circumstances.

The panel discussion on missing persons held last September during HRC 9 and its fruitful deliberations with the participation of a number of prominent experts in this field leads us to a conclusion that we are on the right path. We therefore look forward to the input of the Advisory Committee which is expected to submit its paper on best practices, including comments, ideas on the ways how to tackle this pressing problem more effectively.

Mr. President,

We are just two months close from the **Durban Review Conference** which definitely will be one of the major events of 2009. Azerbaijan is actively engaged in the preparatory process of the Conference and sincerely hopes that at the end of day consensual Outcome document will be finally achieved. The decision taken by the Government of Azerbaijan to make financial contribution to the successful organization of this important conference testifies to the firm commitment of my

country to this process. This Delegation believes that Durban Review Conference should look at all issues within the context of DDPA. We should live up to the expectations of millions of victims around the world by producing a victim-oriented document which will send a new message that nobody is forgotten while protecting human rights.

To conclude, Mr. President, let me reiterate the full support of this Delegation to the dedicated efforts of the Council in fulfilling its mandate and state that the Republic of Azerbaijan is keen to further contribute to the work of this august body, inter-alia by its decision to run for the second term of membership in the Human Rights Council and counts on the support of the states during the election later in May.

Thank you.