

1 March 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss,
President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
at the 67th Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly Implementation
of the Resolutions of the United Nations (A/65/L.60)**

Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

We are gathered here this afternoon to consider a serious issue. Several Member States sponsored Resolution A/65/L.60 proposing, in view of the human rights situation in Libya, the suspension of the rights of membership of Libya in the UN Human Rights Council. We take note of the recommendation issued by the Human Rights Council during its special session on Libya on 25 February.

The events which have shaken the Arab world over the past few weeks remind us that there can be neither security nor development unless human rights are respected. The credibility of the international community, the United Nations General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council is at stake in ensuring that these rights are respected and that human rights violations are punished.

Yesterday, Monday 28 February, I addressed the Human Rights Council at the opening of its sixteenth session. I recalled the importance of a strong Council whose members are committed to strengthening the protection and promotion of human rights by virtue of example, by upholding the highest standards and by proscribing double standards.

The fact that the Council held an emergency special session on Libya last Friday and adopted a resolution on the human rights situation in that country by consensus sends an important signal. The situation in Libya is deeply disturbing. A failure to consider this issue would have meant a significant loss of credibility for the United Nations and the Human Rights Council.

Today it is up to us, the General Assembly, to do our part. We must show unity and resolve in our determination to promote the fundamental values of the Charter. This is our duty to all the men and women who are hoping and struggling to have their rights respected and who, today, are running the greatest risks. Their hopes must not be dashed. I trust that our debate this afternoon will be up to the task and that we will prove that the General Assembly is a strong instrument in the service of peace, security and prosperity.