

2 November 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on Agenda item 64:  
“Report of the Human Rights Council”**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

Alongside peace & security and development, human rights constitute the three core agenda of the United Nations. In this context, consideration of its agenda item 64 on the Report of the Human Rights Council by the Assembly is of special significance.

As a relatively young entity of the UN system in its present form, the Human Rights Council has grown and developed considerably in responding to the needs for ensuring all human rights for all around the world. It has acted quickly and responded to many situations, and it has also promoted dialogue and cooperation amongst States on various human rights issues. In particular, the consensual approach that prevailed throughout the review of the Council’s methods of work and functions demonstrated the commitment of the membership to achieve the shared objective of strengthening the human rights system.

The outcome that resulted from these negotiations, as well as the coordinated approach between Geneva and New York during the review is to be welcomed. I believe firmly that this practice of coordination and consultation between the Council and the Assembly should be built upon and enhanced.

Allow me, in that regard, to commend the work carried out by Ambassador Sihasak Phuangkitkeow of Thailand, whose leadership as the Council President during the review, especially in steering the process to a successful conclusion in Geneva and in coordinating the efforts with the General Assembly, is worthy of our appreciation.

Following the conclusion of the review, it is expected that the Human Rights Council is now better equipped to face the many human rights challenges of today’s world.

In its five years of existence, the foremost achievement of the Council has been the successful completion of the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of UN Member States which were reviewed on the basis of equal treatment on their human rights records and performance. The spirit of cooperation and above all the commitments displayed by the membership to improve their human rights records is to be commended. I look forward to the second cycle of reviews and implementation of the commitments made.

I also note with appreciation that the Human Rights Council's deliberations particularly in recent years on the collective and solidarity rights like right to development, right to food, right to safe drinking water and sanitation, environmental rights and even on the right of peoples to peace have very effectively engaged the international community's expectations in these emerging rights.

Also worthy of special mention are the many panel discussions held on a broad range of human rights issues, which has either drawn international attention to new and emerging issues or broadened international understanding of others. The active participation of UN entities and other international and regional organizations in these panel discussions – and more generally in the work of the Council - has also contributed to human rights mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations as a whole.

I would also like to underscore the significant work carried out by the various special procedure mechanisms of the Council – the eyes and ears of the human rights system. They have a key role to play not only in human rights protection but also in broadening and advancing the understanding of key human rights issues.

As you know, the theme of the 66th session of the General Assembly is mediation and I hope that the Human Rights Council will continue to be instrumental in fostering dialogue among the many cultures and civilizations and be guided by the needed spirit of cooperation and inherent value of mediation. In view of the importance of the Council's work to the overall objectives of the General Assembly, I myself look forward to addressing the March session of the Council next year.

I convey the General Assembly's full support to the work of the Human Rights Council and to the able leadership of the current President, Her Excellency Ms. Laura Dupuy Lasserre, who is here to personally introduce the Report of the Council.