

**United Nations General Assembly  
Fifty-ninth session  
Informal thematic consultations  
Cluster III: “Freedom to live in dignity“**

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**Statement by**

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The Secretary-General’s Report “In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all” stands as a good basis for sharing views and finding the effective and acceptable ways to reform the United Nations. We welcome this possibility of further discussion on the thematic clusters and would hope that the position of each country and each group will be taken into account during the preparation of final document of the forthcoming high level summit.

Our delegation associates itself with the statement of the esteemed Permanent Representative of Malaysia made on behalf of the NAM Member States and shares the approaches expressed in it.

In addition, the delegation of Belarus would like to make some comments with regard to the issues reflected in the fourth part of the Secretary-General’s report.

**The Responsibility to Protect**

Belarus recognises that the lessons of a number of humanitarian crises given to the international community generate a need for more proactive role of the United Nations in preventing and suppressing genocide and “ethnic cleansing”. We back the further efforts of the United Nations in this area.

At the same time, we do not share and can not accept the concept of “the responsibility to protect” proposed by the Secretary-General. In our view, “the responsibility to protect” integrally includes the earlier concept of “humanitarian intervention” allowing military intervention to settle acute problems in the field of human rights observance. We suppose that the common noble purposes of promoting and protecting human rights can not justify the use of force and other extreme coercive measures.

The use of force against sovereign states for addressing massive violations of human rights contradicts the United Nations Charter and fundamental principles of international law, in particular, principles of non-use of force and non-interference in internal affairs.

The use of force for protecting human rights provokes itself violations of human rights, the scale of which can not be properly proportioned to a preventing humanitarian crisis.

The leading role in promoting and protecting human rights belongs to every individual state pursuant to the undertaken international obligations. International human rights protection mechanisms must promote the

strengthening of international cooperation in the area of human rights and underpin relevant national efforts.

In our opinion, international community is not prepared yet to bear the full “collective responsibility to protect” advancing in the Report due to the broad utilization of “double standards” in the field of human rights.

### **Rule of Law**

The Report of the United Nations Secretary-General does not place enough emphasis on the problem of the rule of law. The matter has been mainly restricted to the rule of law in internal affairs. The important problems of ensuring the rule of law in international relations are depreciated.

Non-compliance with the United Nations Charter and basic principles of international law entails serious consequences for the international system and security of humankind. This leads to the opposite process when the rule of law in international relations enshrined in the United Nations Charter has been actually substituting for the past centuries’ rule of force reestablishing nowadays for the so-called “just causes”.

### **Human Rights**

Our delegation notes with regret that in the Secretary-General’s report there is a deep imbalance in the consideration of civil and political rights, on the one part, and social, economical and cultural, on the other. The Republic of Belarus is in strong position, that all human rights are universal, interrelated and indivisible. Focusing attention on the one category of rights and disregarding another or even giving them a minor importance favor the legitimization of selective approach in the consideration of human rights issues. We consider unfair that the right for development has not been promptly noticed despite its incontestably important role in the promotion and protection of human rights.

We share the Secretary-General’s point of view on the crisis tendencies in the activities of the international human rights bodies. First of all, this applies to the Commission on Human Rights. The politicization of human rights issues, its exploitation by individual countries and groups of countries in their own political and economical interests as well as the imposing of double standards policy in human rights issues are the main factors, which prevent the Commission from fulfilling its mandate effectively and entirely.

We believe that the problems that the Commission on Human Rights faces are of political, not institutional nature.

The proposal to replace the Commission on Human Rights with a smaller standing Human Rights Council will create the situation when the absolute majority of Member States will be excluded from the international decision-making process on human rights issues.

Moreover, the creation of human rights mechanisms with a limited membership will enhance the double standards in the consideration of human rights issues and can disturb the fundamental basis of the whole United Nations activity – its universality.

We believe that the human rights mechanisms reform should be realized on the principal of sovereignty, which ensures the equal participation of Member

States in decision-making and consideration of human rights matters. In accordance with this principle the United Nations is called the community of equal nations. This very principle enables us today to participate as equals in the discussion, to share our views and to present our position on the possible ways of reforming the Organization.

The proposal on creation of the Human Rights Council poses more questions than it gives answers. Besides the numerous technical and conceptual issues, the ECOSOC and the GA Third Committee's role in the consideration of human rights matters remains uncertain. It is obvious that with a Council creation the role of these bodies as well as human rights treaty bodies will be diminished and the problem of duplicating their activities will increase.

The Republic of Belarus stands for international cooperation in the field of human rights, the cooperation aiming at assisting governments in fulfilling their international obligations in this field. However, this cooperation should be transparent and be based on mutual respect and equal partnership of Member States.

The Secretary General's propositions on the human rights issues need further and thorough examination, particularly including the recommendations previously made by the High-level Panel.

The UN reform will be more effective only if it is carried out consistently and if the opinions of all states and their groups are taken into account. Forcing events *ex parte* may affect the future of the United Nations.