

Постоянное Представительство  
Российской Федерации  
при  
Организации Объединенных  
Наций



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## STATEMENT

**By the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the UN  
Mr. I.I.Rogachev in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly  
on agenda item 71: Human rights questions**

**November 2, 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

It would not be an exaggeration to say that, at present, the UN activity in the area of promotion and protection of human rights is going through a turning point. The more so, the Organization itself is in the process of cardinal restructuring, and adaptation to modern realities. However, our task is not to totally reorganize everything that has been created and achieved over the 60 years of its existence; including human rights area as well. A thorough analysis and a comprehensive study of the existing experience is required so as to give a new development impetus to UN bodies and institutions in the course of reforms, and ensure that the Organization on the whole and its components function with maximum efficiency for the benefit of all member states.

I must emphasize that we bear tremendous responsibility for the future of the UN, including its human rights sector. There are various ways to pass into history, but we would like very much that our descendants remember us all in good terms, and not blame us for lost opportunities or hasty and unconsidered changes.

Mr. Chairman,

Part 3, Article 2, of the UN Charter proclaims the conduct of international cooperation "...by promoting and developing respect to human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, irrespective of race, sex, language, or religion," as one of the main Goals of the Organization. And, these are not empty words. The Organization, that came into birth as a response to total denial of human rights and freedoms, and crimes and atrocities, committed during World War II, could not leave aside the human rights issues in its activities. We are convinced that this year, when we celebrate not only the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN but also the Victory in World War II, we must all reiterate our commitment to the Goals of the Organization, and to human rights as universal values that constitute the basis of UN foundations.

As never before there is an urgent task to consolidate our efforts, and rally together the member states, in order to address the burning humanitarian issues, find the points of convergence, and, come up with adequate response to challenges and threats, also in the human rights area. As it seems, these tasks are to be addressed by the Human Rights Council – a new human rights body of the UN. Its activity, as well as the human rights issues, should bring the states closer together so as to achieve of the goals enshrined in the UN Charter.

Therefore, it is of particular importance to have consensus among UN member states on the issue of Council's composition, election procedure, and, definition of mandate and functions of the future body. Without the broadest agreement, the credibility of the Council may be undermined even before it is established. This is why we call on everybody to show restraint, and not to try push through any decisions regarding the Council that are dictated by considerations of politics or expediency.

On its part, Russia continues to support the idea of holding the most extensive, all-encompassing and comprehensive consultations on the entire range of issues associated with the establishment and functions of the Human Rights Council. We are also convinced, that until the Council is established and starts its substantial work, the UN Human Rights Commission, together with its special procedure system and the Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights must continue its

full scope operation. In this connection, we would urge certain delegations not to prejudge the outcome or insist on canceling the 62nd session of the UN Human Rights Commission, its dates, as is known, being adopted during the substantive ECOSOC session last July.

In concluding this topic, I would like to make one more point that we repeatedly brought to the attention of our partners. The organizational or technical measures alone can hardly eliminate all problems that prevent the efficient functioning of the human rights institutions of the UN family. First of all we need to adjust the approach taken by states, NGOs, and other members of the international community to the consideration of humanitarian issues, and development of intergovernmental cooperation in human rights area on the whole. Without such a modification, any efforts to reform the human rights sector of the UN would be simply committed to failure.

Mr. Chairman,

The Russian Federation supports the activity of the current UN Human Rights Commissioner Louise Arbour, whose visit to Russia last February opened a new page in our relations and contributed to a better understanding of respective priorities in the human rights area. We are interested that, in accordance with the understanding reached during the visit, a representative of High Commissioner Office started his functions in the UN Moscow Office as soon as possible. We also confirm the invitation to Mrs. L.Arbour by the President of the Russian Federation V.V.Putin to make a working visit to the regions of Russia, including the Northern Caucasus. We hope that this visit could take place as soon as early months of 2006.

Russia is convinced that, to be instrumental, the work of the High Commissioner and her Office should aim at promoting cooperation free from politicization in this field, and take into account the diversity factor of the modern world, thus contributing to the establishment of a just and equitable world order.

Mr. Chairman,

The horrible terrorist attacks that swept across the entire world have brought on the agenda the issue of recognizing a universal right to protection against terrorism. Russia has long stated its willingness and determination to strengthen intergovernmental counter-terror cooperation on its human rights dimension. However, the prospects of such an interaction quite often have been hindered by the splitting between 'good' and 'bad' terrorists, and giving them asylum in spite of the 'extradite or prosecute' principle, and the refusal to recognize them as human rights violators. It is time to leave behind the scholastic argument whether the human rights violations can be committed by states only. In fact, the UN, and other international organizations, has recognized as equally valid a more extensive and up-to-date interpretation that takes into account an active involvement of non-state entities in the international life.

The attempt to protract this debate is nothing less than speculation on the suffering of the victims of terrorist attacks, and yet another display of political expediency. As we had already noted in our statement on this item last year, the states bear responsibility for eradication of terrorism and terrorist threat. In this context, we expect that all members of the international community would address this problem with a degree of responsibility as is dictated by the urgency of current circumstances and the global character of the terrorist threat; this, covering also the arrangements for the respect and protection of human rights and freedoms.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude this statement on the same key as I started. The promotion and protection of human rights is one of the essential areas of UN activity as a universal organization. Our strength is in our unity, and not in dissociation. Only through joint rather than isolated efforts can we address all the existing humanitarian problems, and effectively rebuff any modern challenges and threats in the human rights area.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.