**Statement at the Thirteenth UPR Working Group: Review of India**

**24 May 2012**

**Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bhutan to the United Nations**

Madam President,

As a close friend and neighbour, my delegation warmly welcomes the delegation of India led by His Excellency Mr. Goolam Vahanvati, Attorney General of India and thanks them for their comprehensive presentation of their report.

Bhutan appreciates the serious efforts undertaken by India to promote and protect the human rights of all its citizens. It is to be particularly applauded against the background of India’s huge population and its multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society and the varied and complex challenges that it faces.

We commend the remarkable progress that India has made in the education sector which is evident from the increase in access to primary education and Gross Enrolment Ratio and, decrease in gender gap in enrolment and school drop outs in the recent years. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009 is a clear reflection of India’s commitment to make fundamental human rights real and meaningful for its citizens.

We would like to urge India to further strengthen its efforts in tackling poverty and enhancing access to basic social services such as health and education, especially for the marginalized sections of its society and to consider undertaking appropriate steps, within its legislative and institutional framework, to become state party to human rights instruments that it has not yet acceded to.

I thank you, Madam President.