

**Statement during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of India in the 41st session of the UPR Working Group (7-18 November 2022) delivered by Dr. Sunil Kumar Barnwal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs**

**[Geneva, 10th November 2022]**

**Mr. President,**

**Good afternoon,**

I am Sunil Kumar Barnwal and I represent the Ministry of Home Affairs.

2. The entire gamut of Civil and Political rights are enshrined in Indian Constitution. Civil and criminal laws have in-built safeguards to uphold the rights of individuals and provide special protection to the most vulnerable sections of society.

3. One of the significant efforts to protect human rights, has been the enactment of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, under which the National Human Rights Commission and the State Human Rights Commissions have been established with the mandate to protect, promote, observe and study human rights as specified under the Constitution as also the International Covenants ratified by India.

5. Terrorism is a serious threat to international peace and security, indeed to the entire humanity. It is the gravest form of violation of the most basic of Human Rights, the Right to Life. The Government has taken several policy measures and enacted legislations to deal with the menace of terrorism and to protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India. These legislations seek to secure a balance between the liberty of citizens and security of the State, overseen by an independent judiciary to ensure that there is no abuse or misuse.

6. A similar approach has been taken to protect the freedom of speech and expression while ensuring that this right is not abused. There are adequate safeguards and reasonable restrictions to curb hate speech, both online and offline. The Government has issued advisories and sensitised internet service providers to address the problem of fake news and rumours.

7. India recognizes human trafficking as a serious crime. Article 23 of the Constitution prohibits trafficking in human beings and other forms of forced labour. The Indian Penal Code has been amended in 2013 to enlarge the scope of trafficking related offences and provides for stricter punishment to offenders.

8. The Government has also initiated a comprehensive review of major criminal laws in India, in consultation with all the stakeholders.

9. Law enforcement authorities and security forces are committed to dealing with law and order and security situations strictly in accordance with the principles of legal certainty, necessity and proportionality. There are effective grievance redressal mechanisms to deal with any allegations of violation.

10. India continues to prioritize human rights education as an integral part of the induction and in-service trainings imparted to police, security and judicial service personnel.

**I thank you.**