**Mr. President,**

**Members of the Troika,**

**Excellencies,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

Good afternoon to you all,

On behalf of the delegation of India, I thank the Member States for their participation in our Universal Periodic Review. It is encouraging that 130 Member States participated in our review; also, 10 States took time to relay their advance questions to us during the days preceding the Review. As a member of the Council, India’s commitment to the UPR process has been steadfast. We have supported it as an effective mechanism of the Council.

2. We believe that our 4th UPR provided us a unique opportunity to present to the Member States the various initiatives taken by India for promotion and protection of human rights for our people. We will duly reflect on the observations made by the Member States, which will guide us in taking further steps for fulfilling our human rights obligations. We will examine all the recommendations received and revert with our responses by 52nd Session of the Human Rights Council.

3. Our National Report and our statements made during the Review highlighted the key legislative, policy and developmental initiatives taken by the Government of India for advancing the enjoyment of human rights by our people. They are a testament to the Government of India’s abiding commitment to meet its human rights obligations and create conducive environment for enjoyment of human rights by our people. They also addressed many of the issues raised by Member States in their advance questions and recommendations.

4. During 75 years, since our independence, India has made significant progress in realizing the goals of growth and development and ensuring enjoyment of basic human rights by our people. We have been successful in establishing a vibrant, inclusive and democratic polity and taking democracy to grassroots, which have been vital and enabling factors in enjoyment of human rights by our people.

5. India believes that sustainable development is the key to enjoyment of various basic human rights. The Government has attached the highest priority to inclusive and sustainable development in line with 2030 SDG Agenda. Our various developmental initiatives, some of which we highlighted in our National Report and our statements during the Review, have contributed to progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights of our people. The Government’s policies have been aimed at ensuring social inclusion and gender parity through empowerment of women and girls and disadvantaged segments of Indian society. We have effectively used Information and Communications Technologies for providing good governance as well as inclusive and sustainable development.

6. The Government’s guiding principle of governance ‘*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas*’, that is “together with all, for the progress of all, with trust and contribution of all”, embodies India’s commitment to build an inclusive polity and society and to make our development inclusive.

7. This commitment is also reflected in the theme of India’s G20 Presidency “One Earth, One Family, One Future”. Prime Minister of India, speaking at the conclusion of G20 Summit in Bali today, underlined the need to make the benefits of development universal and inclusive. Stating that global development is not possible without women’s participation, Prime Minister committed to maintain India’s priority of women-led development in its G20 Agenda.

8. As we outlined during the Review, India has a robust constitutional and legislative framework for promotion and protection of human rights. We give equal importance to all civil, political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. All the basic human rights are enshrined in our Constitution as Fundamental Rights and as Directive Principles of State Policy. We have also enacted laws and framed regulations in order to address any gaps in the legal framework to meet our human rights obligations.

9. Further, our independent, proactive and progressive Judiciary has played a key role in ensuring fulfilment of our human rights commitments. Our vibrant media and proactive civil society have been vital in drawing attention to the instances of violations of human rights and their redressal by the Government, Parliament and Judiciary.

10. India’s contribution to global human rights discourse since its independence is well known. Our civilizational ethos of ‘*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’*, that is the ‘World is a family’, and ‘Sarvodaya’, that is ‘welfare of all’, have inspired us to contribute to promotion and protection of human rights globally.

11. India has been playing a leading role in global action against contemporary challenges of terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism, pandemics, climate change, sustainable development, etc., which all impact on enjoyment of human rights of people. India’s developmental partnerships with the Global South contribute to enjoyment of human rights in partner countries.

12. I would like to underline that India is a sui generis case; it is home to 1/6th of humanity; it is a vibrant democracy; an incredibly diverse country; a developing country with huge developmental challenges; and it has been undergoing, simultaneously, social, cultural, religious, political and economic transformations.

13. Before I conclude, let me reiterate the Government of India’s abiding commitment to promotion and protection of human rights of our people, including providing good governance and realising inclusive and sustainable development for welfare of our people. As the world’s largest democracy, India is committed to realise the highest standards of human rights.

14. I thank the members of the Troika, namely, the distinguished PR of Nepal, the Chair-Rapporteur, Netherlands and Sudan, for their commendable efforts. I appreciate the Secretariat’s hard work and the cooperation extended to us throughout the review process. I also thank the interpreters of the Council for their contribution. I take this opportunity to particularly thank the President and his team for the cooperation extended to us during our UPR.

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