



International Service for Human Rights
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Oral statement – Closing of the 12th session

2 October 2009

Mr President,

After the last session, we urged the Council to do more to promote and protect human rights. Today, we can congratulate the Council for some progress and we are pleased that the Council continues to turn its attention to more substantive human rights work.

At this session the Council has demonstrated its ability to address emerging human rights situations, and has found novel ways to deal with such situations. We encourage the Council to continue to explore how to effectively fulfil its mandate to address all situations of human rights wherever they occur and to prevent human rights violations, including those that unfold while it meets.

However, the Council has not only achieved positive results. We have seen unfortunate attempts at undermining the very standards that the Human Rights Council has been set up to protect and promote. We share the concerns expressed by many regarding the resolution on traditional values. We trust that all States will live up to their commitment to ensure that this initiative does in no way undermine human rights protection.

The Council has also created a new open ended working group to review its own work and functioning. While we welcome the upcoming opportunity to improve the Council's functioning, we recall that the General Assembly mandated the Council to review its work and functioning after 5 years – a timeframe which has not elapsed. We strongly believe that the review and in particular any changes to the Council's architecture need to be based on a comprehensive and objective assessment of the Council's achievements and shortcomings in fully implementing its mandate.

We are hopeful that this review process will not detract the Council's attention from the many pressing issues that continue to demand its attention.