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**Statement  
by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the Russian Federation  
Ambassador Alexander V. Yakovenko  
at the High Level Segment  
of the 4-th Session of the  
United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Geneva, 13 March, 2007**

Distinguished Mr. President,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last year has become in many respects a turning-point for development of international co-operation in the field of human rights, for the evolution of the human rights architecture of the UN. It is important therefore to analyze the present situation and the tendencies of its development. But any analysis of this kind would not be complete without taking into account the factors hampering the progress in the intergovernmental co-operation in the field of human rights.

Such analysis should become a result of joint efforts made by all the participants of international relations, by all the States. What is the stumbling block? First, any attempt to make a unilateral decision, any strife to punish those "guilties", whose policy does not meet some subjectively set criteria will inevitably push international relations and intergovernmental co-operation in the field in human rights back into the past. Second, double standards, denial of the principle of the equality of states, use of force and dictate, disregard for territorial integrity and sovereignty – all those are the past of international relations, typical for medieval times, not even for the last century.

The alternative to those unilateral approaches is the strengthening of dialogue and co-operation between the States, involving all the parties concerned in the process of elaboration and adoption of collective decisions, which ought to determine the future of the international community.

The major component of the international regime of human rights observance must be reliance on the principle of collectivity in decision-making, on dialogue and willingness to solve urgent humanitarian issues by joint efforts based on universally recognized human rights standards, taking into account social, economic, historical, cultural and religious specificities and traditions.

Mister President,

We are convinced that the difficulties in establishing effective functioning of human rights institutions and mechanisms will remain until the attempts to use them, as well as the human rights in general, in political and opportunistic interests will continue. We need to relieve this UN dimension from politicization, confrontation and double standards. Without such modification any effort to reform and strengthen the UN human rights sector will be doomed to fail.

Mister President,

The Council is now at the stage of formation of its structure and procedures. The past sessions of the new body have made it evident that clear and structured agenda, rules of procedure and methods of work are the necessary conditions for its effective and efficient functioning. The Russian Federation is ready to participate actively in completion of the mentioned institution-building measures, as well as in elaboration of the modalities of the Universal Periodic Review and the process of reviewing human rights mandates.

Mister President,

We firmly believe, that a special role and responsibility in consolidating the basis of intergovernmental co-operation in the human rights sphere belongs to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. It is our common duty to assist Ms. Louise Arbour in her efforts to depoliticize human rights agenda, to overcome the confrontational trends in the work of human rights institutes and mechanisms, to encourage dialogue and co-operation. We have no doubt that such dialogue is not only possible but vitally important for resolving many global issues, withstanding the threats and challenges faced by the States at the present stage of the development of international relations.

This dialogue must involve all parties concerned. Thereupon we are definitely against the recent appeals to divide all states into "good" and "poor" in terms of human rights standards observance and to set on such basis additional criteria for membership and even participation of States in the work of UN human

rights institutions and mechanisms. These proposals not only contradict the purposes of developing constructive co-operation between the States, but also undermine the basic provisions of the UN Charter.

Mister President,

In the modern world the number of phenomena, which not only compromise the international regime of human rights promotion and protection, but undermine its foundation, basic human rights principals and standards, has sharply increased. In particular, any one in this hall will hardly deny that one of the most acute problems in this field is ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It is indicative that this disease continues to mutate and reshape into new ugly forms. During the past few years this phenomenon became global indeed, affecting even those countries, which regard themselves as successful in terms of human rights standards observance. That is why all the States without any exception must assume collective responsibility for fighting the phenomena. Thereupon we consider as inadmissible the situation when some members of international community prefer to keep silent and, per se, ignore the processes in their neighbourhood, which directly or indirectly contribute to promotion of nationalist ideology.

In our opinion, the recent developments witness that some groups and political forces are trying to erase from people's memory the fundamental fact that the very birth of both the UN and the modern international system of promotion and protection of human rights was the result of the great Victory in the World War II – the victory over the nazi and fascist ideology, based on the postulate of racial superiority. That is why the Russian Federation resolutely condemns any attempts to desecrate the memory of those, who fought and gave their lives to refute that postulate. We are convinced that such actions as demolition of monuments to the warriors of anti-Hitler coalition, attempts to present the Nazis and their aides as heroes, as well as declaring mourning at the dates of deliverance

from nazism will only promote the spreading of ideas and manifestations of ethnic discrimination and xenophobia in the world.

Mister President,

In conclusion I would like to thank you for the contribution you have made to the institutional building of the UN Human Rights Council. I also would express my hope that the process of forming a new organizational structure of the Council will be completed successfully within the period of your presidency.

I thank you.