Madame President,

South Africa aligns itself with the statements delivered by Senegal and Egypt on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively. South Africa commends the timely convening of this panel discussion as 2011 marks 25 years since the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. We also join others in paying tribute to the late Mr Sengupta, who worked tirelessly as the chairperson of the Working Group on the Right to Development.

My delegation believes that international human rights law is predicated on the fundamental principles of non-discrimination and that poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion and economic disparities impede the achievement of social cohesion within States and are an affront to human dignity and equality as emphasized in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. It is important that economic, social and cultural rights are justiciable. South Africa's long standing in this regard is well known as this is important for the practical realization of these rights and is imperative for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In South Africa, the role of education and awareness raising has brought attention to issues of human rights, and as such, citizens are aware of their access to justice where they can claim their rights and more comprehensively the freedom of opinion and expression is central to claiming access to their rights and related services.
Madame President,

Similarly, South Africa remains convinced of the need for the elaboration and adoption of an international legally binding convention on the Right to Development, which should be on a par with other human rights and fundamental freedoms, predicated on the principles of universality, interdependence, interdependence, indivisibility and interrelatedness. The realization or operationalisation of the right to development will always be about the progressive enjoyment of all human rights as enumerated in the two core human rights covenants. Within this context, the NAM position remains valid.

We believe that we should strive to make practical proposals for the right to development to be moved up the political agenda. It should form a key priority of the work of all the major multilateral institutions, so that they will make strides in contributing towards meeting the MDGs.

I thank you.