**2017 Human Rights Council Social Forum**

**Closure of the Social Forum**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Yury Ambrazevich, Permanent Representative of Belarus, Co-Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Social Forum**

Distinguish Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguish high-level leaders and representatives of governments, UN HRC, OHCHR, WHO and UNAIDS, representatives of NGOs and private sector.

It is a great honour for me personally and for the Republic of Belarus, which I represent, to be appointed as Co-Chair of the 2017 Social Forum and to have the opportunity today to address you from this high podium.

The protection and promotion of human rights in the context of combating the AIDS epidemic and infectious diseases is a very sensitive issue for many States. It is directly linked with a complicated dilemma on the most effective ways of solving problems of a particular individual in harmony with sustainable development of the whole society. The emergence of new threats in this area requires even more careful consideration of systems and mechanisms to ensure a balance of interests in this matter in each particular State. I am sure that the exchange of views on this issue on our Forum can enrich the relevant national discussions.

Experience has shown that achieving the SDGs, particularly in the area of health, is impossible without global progress, especially in the realization of social, economic and cultural human rights.

Both of these processes are extremely complex and interdependent and affect the interests of a particular person, his family, many other citizens from neighbors to all taxpayers, and the interests of national security, stability and capacity of social, financial and other state systems, as well as many other aspects.

Unfortunately, there is no universal solution for addressing this complex of problems. It is clear that the key to a solution in each particular State lies in a national dialogue between all interested partners. I shall note here that the success of this dialogue depends mainly on the effectiveness of the actions of the government, as the most powerful and formalized institution of any society. Nobody would probably disagree with me that civil society and the private sector can and should complement efforts of the government, but are unlikely to replace it.

At the same time, while understanding the crucial importance of national efforts to strike a balance between sustainable development and the protection and promotion of human rights, I am deeply convinced of the usefulness of active international cooperation that will enrich national systems with fresh ideas, best practices or support them, if necessary, through international assistance mechanisms.

All this allows me to affirm with confidence the need for an effective national and international partnership aimed at bringing together efforts of all those concerned. In this regard, one of the most important tasks of our Social forum is to discuss ways and experience of building the most effective models of such partnership.

I am convinced, and I hope that you will agree with me, that here at the Forum can be no room for unilateral criticism for the sake of easy political dividends.

I hope that our discussions will allow many participants to better understand the views and abilities of partners working towards a common goal.

I hope that the meetings at the Social forum will be a starting point for many of our participants for new projects and achievements.

I wish all of us to have a meaningful and productive 2017 Social Forum.