

Statement on Sri Lanka in the General Debate under Item 2 and 10

We are delivering this statement on behalf of the following like-minded group of countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

Mr. President,

It is the second time this year that we are engaging on the situation of Sri Lanka in this Council.

Sri Lanka has regularly briefed this Council on the reconciliation process and developments in that country since the end of the conflict, despite its non-recognition of the resolution 25/1. We also note that Sri Lanka has continued to engage with regular mechanisms of this Council, including special procedures, treaty bodies and the UPR.

We recognize these efforts and encourage Sri Lanka to continue its endeavours towards achieving reconciliation in an inclusive and comprehensive manner. We also note Sri Lanka's efforts to share experiences with its regional and international partners towards this end.

We therefore believe that the expansive mandate given to the OHCHR by Res. 25/1 to carry investigations on Sri Lanka is unjustified, especially in the context where the country is implementing its own domestic processes.

OHCHR's efforts should contribute to a state's own efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights, as stipulated in the UNGA Res. 48/141, UNGA Res. 60/251, UNGA Res. 65/281 and in the IB package. These core documents do not confer any oversight authority to the OHCHR over sovereign countries. Any external assistance to countries should expressly be in consultation with and with the consent of that country.

As we have observed, successive resolutions on Sri Lanka have not enjoyed the consensus of the Council members. This was amply evident by the divided vote of 14 against, 10 abstentions on OP 10 of resolution 25/1, which sought to establish the OHCHR investigation.

The international community should be mindful not to jeopardize the delicate process of reconciliation that is already underway in Sri

Lanka. Constructive dialogue in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation in keeping with the accepted norms of international engagement is key in ensuring and promoting universal respect for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

Naming and shaming countries through country specific action based on politically motivated agenda, neither bodes well for human rights nor the future and the credibility of this Council. We should also be mindful not to set dangerous precedents, which may adversely affect all our countries.

I thank you, Mr. President.