**India’s Statement at the 3rd HRC Intersessional Meeting for Dialogue and Cooperation on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**‘Building back better: Integrating human rights in sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic’

14th January, 2021, 3pm to 5 pm**

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**Mr Chair,**

We thank the OHCHR for organizing this inter-sessional meeting and also thank all the distinguished Speakers and panelists for their insightful remarks and presentations. We also take this opportunity to thank the Hon’ble Minister for Health and Social Welfare, State of Kerala, India for her presence here.

**Mr Chair,**

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges before the entire world. The Government of India adopted a proactive and graded response to contain the spread of the pandemic and mitigate its social and economic impact. Measures taken include imposing a timely lockdown, boosting the health system, ramping up the production of necessary medical supplies, increase in testing, effective isolation protocol as well as a sustained public awareness campaign. As a result, India’s recovery rate now stands at 96.51 % with a reduced case fatality rate of 1.44%.

India believes that the integration of international human rights norms and standards in the design and implementation of COVID-19 socio-economic and recovery processes is as critical as ever to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

 With this objective, India’s response to address the COVID-19 pandemic includes, a US 279 billion dollar economic package, comprehensive health coverage for front-line workers and direct cash transfers for the most vulnerable, including unemployment protection for job losses, and income support through Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana.

In addition, India has extended medical-related assistance to more than 150 countries, pledged US 15 Million dollars to GAVI, and have operationalized the SAARC COVID-19 Emergency Fund with an initial contribution of $ 10 million. We have pledged to contribute US $ 1 million to ASEAN COVID Fund.  India has activated its e-ITEC capacity building network to deliver medical expertise content for training of healthcare personnel of partnering developing countries. As the world’s largest vaccine producing country, our Prime Minister has pledged to deploy its vaccine production and delivery capacity to assist all humanity in fighting this crisis.

To conclude, India is firmly committed to the progressive realisation of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, for its citizens in the spirit of ‘leaving no one behind’. All major initiatives of the Government of India, including our response and measures following the pandemic, are aimed at promoting ‘inclusive growth’, in line with the Sustainable Development Agenda, and to further the enjoyment of these rights.

 Thank you Chair.

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