

PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA TO THE UN, GENEVA
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

19TH SESSION (27 February-23 March 2012)

**Item 3: General Debate : Promotion and Protection of all
Human Rights, Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural
Rights including the Right to Development
(8 March 2012)**

STATEMENT BY INDIA

Madam President,

At the outset, my delegation extends warm greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the International Women's Day to all the women of the world. Today, we celebrate the spirit of ordinary women, who have played sterling roles in shaping their families, communities, societies and countries. At the same time, the international community needs to reflect on advancing the goal of all-round development of women and their empowerment.

2. The Planning Commission of India, through its Five Year Plans is committed to enable women to be "equal partners and participants in development". The Eleventh Five Year plan has recognized women as agents of sustained socio-economic growth, change and development. In view of this, the central vision of the 11th Plan (2007-2012) aims to trigger an **inclusive development process** to ensure broad-based improvement in the quality of life. This objective encompasses several inter-related components,

including rapid growth, employment opportunities, access to essential services in health and education, equality of opportunity, empowerment through education, environmental sustainability, recognition of women's agency and good governance.

Madam President,

3. The Right to Development is fundamentally about translating this right into improving the quality of life of our people to create opportunities for all our people to lead a life of dignity and self-respect. It is about increasing people's access to such basic needs as nutrition, health, education and gainful employment. We need an optimal mix of empowerment and entitlement in the approach towards effective implementation of this right.

4. In India, the Right to development has been strengthened by the Right to Information Act. This act is one of the strongest such legislations in the world. It is also an essential tool of democratic participation, through which the boundaries of the "rights approach" to development can be further extended. It brings in transparency and accountability into the development process. The combination of the National Rural Employment Guarantee and the RTI Acts provides a very potent base for expanding the rights of citizens vis-a-vis the state ensuring equity and social justice.

5. It is our endeavour to ensure that the most vulnerable sections of the Indian society particularly, women and Minorities realise their Right to Development and are able to deal with atrocities and the curbing of their civil, social, economic and political rights.

6. Lastly, as stated in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992, the right to development must be fulfilled to equitably meet the needs of present and future generations.

Thank you, Madam President.
