Thank you, Mr. President.

The Philippines thanks His Excellency Baudelaire Ndong Ella for his report on the 2014 sessions of the Human Rights Council, of which the Philippines was privileged to be a part.

In our participation as a member of the Human Rights Council, the Philippines has been guided by the directive of GA Resolution 60/251 that the work of the Council should be based on universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, constructive international dialogue and cooperation.

It is in this light that we wish to continue to underline the primacy of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as the foremost mechanism for reviewing the human rights records of member states. By affording States a singular opportunity to engage in dialogue with other states and stakeholders including civil society, the UPR ensures that best practices and recommendations are exchanged, processed and filtered through to the domestic level.

We therefore take heart that the second cycle of the UPR has achieved not just 100% participation, but also high level participation, illustrating the commitment of states to the process.
Mr. President,

2014 saw the establishment of three (3) new mandates in the special procedures: a Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, a Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights and an Independent Expert on capacity-building and technical cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire in the field of human rights.

We laud the hard work and passion of our special procedures mandate holders.

Even as our delegation recognizes the vital role of the special procedures, we continue to express, as we have done so in previous sessions, that the performance of their mandates must always be in accordance with GA Resolution 60/251, which recognizes that the promotion and protection of human rights should be based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue and aimed at strengthening capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations.

In the review of states’ human rights records, mandate holders often speak of accountability; but they must also show responsibility. They ask for openness, but they must also provide balance. And most importantly, they must engender trust from all stakeholders.

For the effective performance of the special procedures can be achieved only if there is trust from the states and all stakeholders concerned, and such trust can only exist when states are assured that special procedures are faithful to and respectful of their mandates, as expressly defined by the resolutions creating them.

Mr. President,

The growing number of Special Procedures mandates, Commissions of Inquiry and fact-finding missions, together with the multitude of resolutions adopted this year by the Human Rights Council, is illustrative of the increasing complexity and breadth of human rights issues in today’s world.

These are not stand-alone issues, but are interdependent, cross-cutting and are part of what High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein refers to as a “complex web of violations of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights requiring solutions that can only come from more emphatic and comprehensive protections.”

We cannot agree more.

Indeed, we must closely examine and understand the how’s and whys of these crises, so that we can learn to prevent and address them. Our delegation believes that the integration of human rights concerns in the shaping of the Sustainable Development Goals is a step in this direction.
Equally critical to this is the fulfillment of the Council’s mandate to promote advisory services, technical assistance and capacity building, in consultation with and with the consent of states concerned.

Mr. President,

Last November 8, the Philippines and the international community marked the 1st year anniversary of the devastating Typhoon Haiyan.

We are thankful of the continuing assistance provided to us in the rebuilding of Tacloban and the other areas destroyed by Haiyan.

Haiyan showed all of us the necessary link between sustainable development and human rights, and we welcome in this regard the Human Rights Council’s discussions on the promotion and protection of human rights, including development of a repertoire of best practices, in post disaster situations.

As the Philippines concludes its membership in the Council this year, we congratulate the newly-elected members of the Council and wish them strength and fortitude as they continue the Council’s directive of helping states build an enabling environment to better promote the human rights of their peoples.

Thank you, Mr. President.