



**PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
GENEVA**

FIRST SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

(GENEVA, 19 - 22 JUNE 2006)

STATEMENT

BY

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GENEVA, 19 JUNE 2006

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The creation of the Human Rights Council constitutes a landmark for the UN Human Rights System.

First of all I would like to fully subscribe to the statement made this morning by the Austrian Presidency on behalf of the European Union.

The Greek government welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Council, responsible to contribute effectively to the prevention of human rights violations, to respond promptly to human rights emergencies and to provide guidance and assistance to all countries in order to achieve the highest standards of human rights protection. An effective and efficient Human Rights Council will certainly give human rights the central role foreseen by the Charter and will further enhance the credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness of the UN human rights system.

It is perhaps now the time to recall some milestones in the Human Rights history.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been the source of inspiration of all subsequent international human rights instruments. It is a fact that the pivotal concept of the interdependence and indivisibility of human rights was already embedded in this historic text. The Commission on Human Rights has subsequently promoted other key concepts, such as the rule of law or the inter-relationship between human rights, development and democracy. Other landmark contributions to standard-setting include instruments against torture as well as, more recently, the draft Convention on Enforced Disappearances.

Beyond standard setting, the contribution on the Commission on Human Rights has been instrumental in developing new procedures for the protection of human rights. In that context, I would like to highlight the importance and the valuable contribution of special procedures.

Furthermore, the Commission has been a unique forum allowing NGOs and National Human Rights Institutions to voice their concerns and to share their experiences. I am confident