

Welcome Address of the Secretary General, NHRC
for Human Rights Day 2013

Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission, Justice Shri K.G. Balakrishnan, Hon'ble Members of the National Human Rights Commission, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Chairperson and Members of the National Human Rights Commission, it is my privilege to welcome the Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari here on the occasion of 'Human Rights Day'. Sir, we are greatly

honoured to have you amongst us, Your presence here today, is indeed encouraging as it reflects not only your deep interest in human rights, but also underscores the country's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights.

In keeping with the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948 and the Paris Principles, adopted at the first 'International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights' held in Paris in October 1991, the National Human Rights Commission of India has worked unceasingly for the realization of a range of civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights for the citizens of this country.

It has been the consistent endeavour of the Commission to safeguard human rights of individuals and communities across the country and to create an enabling environment for the realization of not only civil and political rights, but also secure to the people of the country, social and economic justice, in consonance with the spirit of the Indian Constitution.

The Commission has been making concerted efforts to spread human rights education and awareness in different parts of the country. The Commission believes that human rights education has the potential to promote values, beliefs and attitudes that encourage respect for the rights of oneself and

others, and, in the long-run, play a potent role in preventing human rights abuses leading thereby to the creation of a just society in which the rights of all individuals and communities are safe and secure.

It is heartening for the Commission to note that there is growing human rights awareness within the country and the people of the country have placed their faith in the Commission for the protection of their rights as is evident from the substantial increase in number of complaints received by the Commission over the last 20 years.

Through this journey, the efforts of the Commission have been supported by various sections of society, the Judiciary, governmental agencies, civil society actors, and the media – all of whom have stood by the Commission in this noble pursuit. For the

NHRC, therefore, this occasion provides an opportunity for recording our gratitude for their continual support.

NHRC, India is committed as an institution to its entity as a strong, unwavering, and independent watch guard ever alert to instances of human rights violations. NHRC takes suo-moto notice of such violations. It also reviews the safeguards provided by the Constitution or any law for protection of human rights.

I would once again like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all the distinguished dignitaries present today; members of the Diplomatic

Corps; representatives of Government of India and State Governments, sister Commissions, UNIC and other UN Agencies; all our friends from Civil Society, from the print and electronic media; and the officers and staff of NHRC, India to this function. Rest assured that with your continued support, the NHRC will be working with renewed vigour to fulfill its commitment to preserving and protecting the human rights of all citizens of this country.

Thank you.