



**Human Rights Council 17th Session
Item III : Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Intervention by Charles Graves

Mr. Chairman,

In spite of the International agreement in 2000 on the *Millenium Development Goals*, it appears that a considerable number of countries will not attain the MDG objectives by the year 2015. The social changes operating in certain countries, especially in the Maghreb, and other Arab regions, have revealed widespread social injustice, lack of transparency, corruption, bad government and general lack of freedom of opinion.

The Human Rights Council should respond to the urgent needs of all the victims of authoritarian political structures through dialogue and the cooperation of all countries with the mechanisms of the Human Rights Council.

The Council should investigate and evaluate the crimes committed and the violation of human rights in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and the DRC.

In this respect, Mr. Chairman, we are preoccupied with the situation of human rights in *Western Sahara* and we note the Security Council document of 27 April this year on this highly important issue. We shall support continual dialogue and discussion about the autonomy of the Western Sahara region which has been initiated by the Kingdom of Morocco. We hope the political and institutional reforms occuring in Algeria and Morocco will contribute positively towards the improvement of the situation of human rights in Western Sahara.

Mr. Chairman, finally, we note with continuing alarm the restrictions which the government of China has been placing upon free circulation of ideas in the Chinese media, and in particular the restrictions on the activities of human rights defenders. We also regret the continued lack of consideration by China of all the economic, social and cultural rights of its ethnic minorities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

