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**Clustered ID with Special Rapporteurs on Peaceful Assembly and
Association and the Right to Education**

Delivered by Mr. Brian E. Frenkel,
Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Advisor

Thank you, Mr. President.

We would like to thank the SR on Peaceful Assembly and Association for her report. We agree with her on the critical role that a vibrant civil society plays in the emergence and existence of effective democratic systems. Civil society strengthens a State's democratic credentials and provides avenues through which people directly or indirectly exert their influence on public affairs.

The freedom to associate with persons in order to pursue a lawful aim is recognized in Israel as a fundamental constitutional right. Though, as with other basic freedoms, this is not absolute, and must be reconciled with other legitimate fundamental interests, such as the maintenance of social order or public security. However, any limitations on its exercise must meet strict standards of scrutiny regarding their justification and scope.

Israel recognizes the key role that CSOs play in the promotion of human rights. They enjoy the freedom to associate and to pursue their various aims. There are hundreds of CSOs in Israel which work freely and fruitfully in all areas of human rights, and the State cooperates with many of them.

For example, in the process of articulating Israel's periodic reports to the Human Rights Committees, relevant NGOs are invited to submit comments prior to the compilation of the report and their contributions are given substantial consideration.

Mr. President,

We also thank the SR on the right to education for her report, highlighting the non-formal education.

Israel recognizes the important role that non-formal education plays in providing education to out-of-school children and adults and invests great efforts in the promotion of equal opportunity and access to education for all. Examples can be found in: the "Free Education for Sick Children Law" providing a suitable educational framework for sick children and children in hospitals or at home due to long term illness; the extended bilingual educational system for Arab and Jewish communities; the "Special Education Law" providing education frameworks for people with special needs and children with disabilities; adult immigrants education programs, as well as many other programs.

Thank you.