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**UN Human Rights Council**  
**37<sup>th</sup> Session – February 26, 2018**

**Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming**

Delivered by Ambassador Aviva Raz Shechter,  
Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN in Geneva

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Thank you, Mr. President,

Having recently completed its third Universal Periodic Review, Israel is a strong proponent of this mechanism. While it is not without flaws, a carefully exercised periodic review may prove to be a powerful instrument in the hands of any member state, enabling it to take stock of its domestic human rights situation through a unique peer-review process.

In addition, we find that active participation in the periodic reviews of other countries enables a state to assess its progress compared with that of other countries, and thus better identify gaps that need bridging.

At the same time, it should be stressed that UPR alone cannot substitute a robust national commitment to pursue human rights objectives in a continuous manner. UPR, as its name rightly suggests, remains periodic. But the need to respect human rights is anything but that. It is required at all times. In order to make the most out of UPR a state should do much more than just check the box every four to five years

Mr. President,

One of the key factors that determine how effective UPR can be as part of a state's human rights toolbox is the quality of the recommendations it gets. This is why recommending countries should refrain from making unhelpful comments or political statements, and focus on constructive and practical recommendations.

I thank you Mr. President.