



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fourteenth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Note verbale dated 18 August 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Poland addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and, with reference to its note no. 548/ML/2010 of 30 June 2010, has the honour to transmit the enclosed additional remarks\* of the Government of Poland to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, Anand Grover (A/HRC/14/20/Add.3), with the request to include the said remarks in the documentation of the fourteenth session of the Human Rights Council and to post them on the OHCHR website as an integral part of the position of the Government of Poland.

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\* Reproduced in the annex, as received and in the language of submission only.

## Annex

### **Additional remarks of the Polish Government to the Report of the Special Rapporteur Mr. Anand Grover, as presented by the Delegate of the Government of the Republic of Poland at the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council**

The Polish Government regrets that the Special Rapporteur did not mention the fact that during the last twenty years in Poland infant mortality rate fell by 71% and the maternal mortality dropped even more considerably, by more than 82%. The latter figure contradicts the assumption of the Report that the liberalization of abortion improves maternal health. The abortion was accessible for social and economic reasons from 1956 to 1993, and this possibility was repealed by the new *Act on Family Planning, Protection of the Human Foetus and Conditions of Permissible Termination of Pregnancy*. Polish experience proves at least that there is no simple correlation between liberalization of abortion and improvement of maternal health, as well as that this relation may be inversely proportional. To conclude, maternal health depends on overall medical conditions.

In the context of legal conditions concerning termination of pregnancy Poland would like to reiterate that there is no universal right to abortion and the regulation of that issue is of the exclusive competence of States. That principle was included in international documents, such as Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Moreover, the ICPD Programme of Action underlines the full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people in every country as a crucial element of implementing reproductive health policies. Concerning all activities of international community in the field of reproductive health, Poland recalls that our understanding of the concept of sexual and reproductive health remains such as it was agreed in the ICPD.

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