Thank you, Mr. President.

First of all, my delegation fully aligns itself with the statement presented by Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to thank the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur for their clear statements.

Mr. President, exactly one week ago, I was in Burma. As Human Rights Ambassador, I was requested by my government to acquire first hand information on the situation on the ground and to convey our concerns. My visit took place against the background of increasing mass demonstrations led by Buddhist monks. In my discussions with representatives of the government, I urged for restraint in dealing with the protests. I expressed the hope that the protests would lead to a dialogue between the Burmese authorities and the opposition. I urged for the release of demonstrators and other political detainees, including Nobel price winner Aung San Suu Kyi.
The representative of the government stated that the government wanted the situation to be resolved peacefully.

The Burmese regime did not live up to its promise. This is why my Government asked me to address this council in my capacity as Human Rights Ambassador.

The situation escalated and the legitimate and peaceful demonstrations of monks and other civilians have been repressed with force by the Burmese security forces. We receive increasingly credible reports that many more persons died and disappeared than the Burmese authorities reported on. This obviously warrants the international community’s attention.

My delegation strongly condemns the use of violence by the Burmese authorities. We urge the authorities to respect the human rights of all Burmese citizens, both their civil and political rights as well as their economic, social and cultural rights. The situation in all these areas is disastrous. The Burmese authorities should start a peaceful and inclusive dialogue with the opposition leaders to come to political
reforms based on internationally recognized human rights norms. Political prisoners should be released. My delegation is of the opinion that non compliance by the authorities must result in international repercussions. We urge the authorities to fully cooperate with the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy to Burma, Ibrahim Gambari. My delegation is also interested in suggestions by Special Rapporteur Pinheiro on how the international community can engage with the authorities and the opposition leaders in a way that will lead to political reforms based on internationally recognized human rights norms.

Mr. President, we have collectively decided that this Council should address urgent human rights situations if and when they occur. The situation in Burma is very serious indeed. It is clear that the Burmese regime is not committed to promoting democracy or human rights. It maintains a climate of fear. This is life in Burma as I noticed it last week. We regret the refusal of the Burmese Government so far to enter into a dialogue with the protesters, as in our view a peaceful solution to the present situation in Burma would not only recognise the protection of human rights to which Burmese citizens are
entitled but also greatly contribute to stability in the entire region. We feel that the attitude of the Burmese authorities constitutes a constant threat to such stability.

For these reasons, the Human Rights Council must act today. The Council must strongly condemn the violent repression of peaceful demonstrations, urge the government of Burma to act in accordance with international human rights norms and ensure that the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar can visit the country and report to the Council in December.

Mr. President, it is the obligation of members of the Human Rights Council to strongly defend the values the Council was established for.

I thank you, Mr. President.