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**Swedish Presidency
of the European Union**

**Side event on discrimination based
on work and descent**

September 16. 2009

On behalf of the European Union, let me thank the organisers for arranging this side event on discrimination based on work and descent. This constitutes an opportunity to further discuss this issue, that we find very important.

In our view, racism, intolerance and discrimination not only prevent the full enjoyment of human rights, but also represent a threat to democratic societies and their fundamental values. These negative phenomena remain incompatible with the principles on which the European Union is founded and, therefore, the fight against discrimination will continue to be part of the EU struggle for human rights. Caste based discrimination and other forms of discrimination based on work and descent is an important priority for the European Union.

We welcome the report elaborated by Prof. Yokota and Prof. Chung. The EU has advocated, as a matter of principle, that all the reports of the former Sub-Commission, submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be issued as UN documents, and we cosponsored the resolution 10/117 on this matter in HRC10. We welcome that the reports have now been published.

We recognize, and appreciate, that many steps have been taken to combat caste based discrimination, both in legislative, executive and judiciary levels, and we would encourage to continue a sharing best practices and experiences.

We reiterate our support to the work of the Human Rights Council, and our interest in the draft UN principles and guidelines for the elimination of discrimination based on work and descent, that we hope can be a useful tool in the ongoing work to prevent discrimination in this regard. We will study the recommendations that were made here today by Professor Yokota.

Thank you.

Delivered by Counsellor Lina van der Weyden, Sept 16. 2009.
Due to time constraints, the light grey parts were not read out.