



**Universal Periodic Review of ECUADOR, 21 May 2012
Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia welcomes the delegation of Ecuador to the 13th session of the UPR and thanks them for their work on the report.

We note that there have been some positive changes since the last UPR in 2008. Ecuador has adopted a new constitution that establishes a general framework for the protection of human rights, which is especially notable in the area of social, economic and cultural rights. This has been accompanied by a substantial national investment into the health and education sectors. Estonia also welcomes the provisions of the new legislation that seek to prevent and eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Estonia observes that whilst reforms are being undertaken in the administration of justice and the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary still remains a challenge. We also encourage the government of Ecuador to pay due attention to the high number of disappearances, extrajudicial executions, and abuses by members of the armed and police forces.

We note that the new constitution explicitly recognizes the right of indigenous people to participate in political and administrative life. We encourage the government of Ecuador to make further efforts to guarantee these rights in practice, particularly with respect to indigenous women who continue to face double discrimination based on their ethnic origin and sex.

Last but not least, Estonia is seriously concerned by some of the Ecuador's policies in the area of press freedom, which were also noted by the SR for Freedom of Expression. We are alarmed by the use of official censorship and anti-press harassment that includes the use of criminal and civil defamation suits to silence critics. Estonia recommends Ecuador to stick to its international commitments, particularly to art. 19 of ICCPR.

Thank you.