



**Statement by Sweden in the
interactive dialogue on Morocco**

*To be delivered by Counsellor Anna Jakenberg Brinck
Geneva, May 22, 2012*

Madam President,

Sweden welcomes the political reforms that have been initiated in Morocco and that the new Constitution confirms that international human rights take precedence over national law. We also welcome that a significant number of persons jailed for expression of opinions have been released.

Although many issues are widely and publicly debated in Moroccan press we are concerned about recent measures to censor the press and to restrict press freedom, including prosecution and sentencing of an editor for his writings on corruption and several incidents of interrogation of journalists. The measures to suppress freedom of expression online are equally worrying, including sentencing people to jail last year merely for expressing themselves on the Internet.

Sweden is concerned that people do not fully enjoy freedom of expression, association and assembly in matters pertaining to the situation and status of Western Sahara. Although the Moroccan Government has worked to improve the situation, we are still troubled about reports of harassment of people for expressing their views on Western Sahara.

Sweden recommends Morocco to take immediate steps to implement the new Constitution's provision that international human rights are to be fully respected, which includes press freedom, freedom of expression, assembly and association, including views on the situation of and in Western Sahara.

Thank you Madam President