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# **Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review**

## **Second Cycle**

### **13<sup>th</sup> Session (2012)**

#### **Review of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Palais des Nations

Geneva

31 May 2012

#### **Opening statement**

##### **Curaçao**

- Madam President;
- Honorable representatives of Member States and  
Observer States of the Human Rights Council;
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Government of Curaçao welcomes this opportunity to engage with the international community in a dialogue on the full scope of its human rights situation. Although over the years its predecessor, the Island Territory of Curaçao -like all other jurisdictions- has met with challenges in some

quarters, one can safely say that on the whole universal rights and fundamental freedoms are also duly respected and protected in this part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Since it obtained an autonomous status within the Kingdom on 10 October 2010, Curaçao has made an effort to fulfill its human rights obligations to the best of its abilities. As a major achievement can be cited, the entry into force on 15 November 2011 of the new Penal Code, which provided among other things for the criminalization of trafficking in persons. The Code also entails a modernization of juvenile criminal law, which, in conjunction with the new juvenile detention center projected to be fully operational in 2014, marks a significant improvement in the treatment of young first-offenders and other delinquent adolescents.

Another initiative worth mentioning is the recent decision made by Cabinet to establish a Human Rights Institute in accordance with the Paris Principles on the island. The preliminary groundwork for the establishment of the Institute is being spearheaded by the Treaty Section of the Directorate of Foreign Relations.

Although the Curaçaoan national machinery for the advancement of women is in its start-up phase -given the fact that the administrative structure of the new country is as yet not completed- on behalf of the Government, I can share encouraging statistics with this august gathering on the participation of women in public life and decision-making in my country. One third of our members of parliament are women. At present in the civil service 50 per cent of the top positions at the levels of Permanent Secretary and Director are filled by women. And last but not least: 70 per cent of the staff members of the Foreign Relations Office are female academics.

As a member of the delegation of the Kingdom I will readily answer any question and/or address any comment from the floor concerning the human rights situation in Curaçao. In closing I would like to reiterate the Curaçaoan Government's commitment with the UPR process and its willingness to take all recommendations emanating from this review to heart.

I thank you.

