

**Statement of the Republic of Latvia
13th session of the UPR
Review of the Philippines**

Madam President,

Latvia would like to thank the delegation of the Philippines for the comprehensive national report, its presentation today and their constructive engagement in the UPR process.

After studying carefully national report and other relevant documents, we note with appreciation that in 2012 the Philippine Government has extended an invitation to the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons to visit the country; however we also note that significant number of requests by special procedures mandate holders to visit the Philippines have not been accepted yet. Latvia **recommends** to the Philippines to step up cooperation with special procedures mandate holders by responding positively to the pending visit requests and eventually consider extending a standing invitation to all special procedures mandate holders of Human Rights Council.

Latvia welcomes the recent decision of the Philippines to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and we **recommend** to the Philippines to review its national legislation in order to ensure its full alignment with obligations under the Rome Statute, including incorporating the Rome Statute definition of crimes and general principles, as well as adopting provisions enabling cooperation with the Court.

Latvia commends the efforts undertaken so far by the Philippine Government with regard to combating trafficking in human beings; however, we also note that many challenges still remain. We are concerned about the reports of large number of women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labour. We **recommend** to further strengthen the measures to combat human trafficking and to provide the necessary assistance to the victims of trafficking.

Thank you, Madam President.