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UPR 13 – Statement of the Czech Republic to South Africa

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of South Africa and would like to thank for presenting its report.

The Czech Republic acknowledges the progress in the enhancement of the role of women in political life in South Africa as well as the institutional innovations such as the establishment of the new Department of Women, Children & People with Disabilities. High rates of gender-based violence however remain a serious problem. We recommend to South Africa to take increased measures to protect and provide redress to women subjected to gender-based violence.

The Czech Republic regrets that South Africa has not adopted any legislative measures to prevent, prosecute and punish acts of torture and other ill-treatment since the first review in 2008. We recommend to South Africa to enact a legislation which would, in line with Article 1 of the Convention against Torture, prevent and eliminate torture, and to ratify OP-CAT at the earliest opportunity.

The Czech Republic expresses concern about the attempts to limit freedom of expression, in particular the approval in November 2011 of the Protection of State Information Bill. We recommend to South Africa to reconsider the Protection of State Information Bill to ensure its conformity with ICCPR, in particular by removing excessive penalties for publication of classified information and the inclusion of a public interest defense.