

UPR – South Africa – 31 May 2012

Intervention by New Zealand

New Zealand welcomes South Africa and thanks it and civil society for the comprehensive reports. South Africa has been at the forefront in many areas of human rights, such as the fight against racial discrimination and, more recently, by leading the landmark UN resolution on LGBT persons. New Zealand commends South Africa for these efforts.

While South Africa has made good progress on a number of MDGs, New Zealand notes that maternal mortality and morbidity may actually be increasing. Could the delegation comment on the challenges it is facing in this area and how it intends to address them?

New Zealand notes South Africa's efforts to realise the rights of persons with disabilities, including establishing a Department of Women, Children, and People with Disabilities. To complement these efforts, New Zealand **recommends** that South Africa establish without delay an independent national monitoring mechanism, in line with article 33 of the CRPD.

South Africa has constitutional protections for equality, however, some important gaps remain between law and practice. New Zealand notes the various stakeholder reports describing the seriousness and frequency of sexual violence, with targeted violence against LGBT persons a particular problem. Could South Africa elaborate on what further steps it intends to take to ensure freedom from violence and discrimination in practice for all persons? New Zealand **recommends** that South Africa ensure police and justice officials have appropriate training and direction to improve the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence including that based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Lastly, is South Africa able to provide any update on the Combatting of Torture Bill and on plans to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture?