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**Italian intervention**

**UPR – TUNISIA**

(22/05/2012)

We thank the distinguished delegation of Tunisia for its meaningful participation to the second cycle of the UPR.

In particular, we commend Tunisian authorities for the recent ratification of several human rights instruments, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the enhanced cooperation with the UN human rights machinery, for example through the opening of a regional office of the OHCHR in charge of Northern Africa. As recalled during the visit of the Italian Head of State to Tunis last week, Tunisia is an example of moderation for other countries that have embarked on their own “Arab Springs” and its success could contribute to the stability of the entire region. The free elections to the Constituent Assembly have paved the way for a new institutional reality that – we are confident – will enable the promotion of democracy and human rights in the country. A crucial role in the democratic transformation of the country will certainly be the approval of a new Constitution.

In the spirit of friendship between the two countries, reaffirmed by the recent joint declaration for a strategic partnership, we would like to make the following recommendations:

- 1) Italy commend Tunisia for the *de facto* moratorium on capital executions since 1991 and recommends to insert in the new Constitution the abolishment of the death penalty.
- 2) Italy recommends Tunisian authorities to consider the insertion of freedom of expression and the media among the fundamental principles of the new Constitution.
- 3) Italy, finally, recommends Tunisia to guarantee the respect of freedom of religion by everybody, during this transitional period and beyond.

I thank you, Madame President.