**Statement by the Delegation of Thailand**

**Mr. Netithorn Praditsarn, First Secretary,**

**14th Session of the Working Group on the UPR – Benin**

**25 October 2012**

Madame President,

 Thailand welcomes the delegation of Benin to the UPR today and thanks them for the report and statement. We commend its serious commitment to promoting and protecting human rights. Among others, its establishment of relevant human rights agencies and mechanisms will certainly strengthen its human rights infrastructure. We also note its cooperation with the Special Procedures and relevant treaty bodies as well as regional mechanisms.

 As technical cooperation and capacity-building plays an important role in support of human rights promotion and protection, Benin’s agreements with international partners on poverty reduction programs in order to implement the UPR recommendations are noteworthy. It is our hope that Benin’s request for funding in order to implement recommendations made by the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture would be considered favorably. In this connection, Thailand stands ready to explore venue of cooperation with Benin in the areas of mutual interest.

 Moreover, we appreciate active promotion of the right to education and the right to health by the Government despite its budget constraints. Its free education up to the secondary level as well as the universal health insurance scheme, and free malaria treatment for mothers and children up to 5 years of age are particularly commendable.

Madame President,

 While we recognize progress in Benin in the area of human rights, there remain areas for improvement, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups. We therefore recommend Benin to continue its efforts on poverty reduction by expanding its micro-credit programs to small entrepreneurs, youths, and women, especially in the rural areas. We also recommend Benin to continue to combat all forms of violence against children, including trafficking of children and violence against so called “witch children.”

 Lastly, we wish Benin much success in its second cycle of the UPR. Thank you, Madame President.

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