



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

14th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

Finland's questions and recommendations to Gabon 23 October 2012

Madam President,

Finland wishes to thank Gabon for the national report and its presentation today. Finland welcomes Gabon's abolition of death penalty in 2010 and the ratification of the *Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*, the same year.

Finland appreciates that Gabon has adopted legislation to combat human trafficking of children and set up mechanisms such as National Observatory of the Rights of the Child. However, the current legislation limits protection to victims under the age of 18, and the definition of trafficking does not cover all forms of exploitation including labour and sexual exploitation, slavery and removal of organs. There have been also concerns regarding the implementation of the legislation.

By ratifying the Palermo Protocol, Gabon made a further commitment to take effective and comprehensive action to prevent and combat trafficking, protect and assist the victims as well as prosecute and punish traffickers. What measures is the Government taking to address these issues and to ensure protection of the victims' human rights?

We have two recommendations:

1. **Increase efforts to ensure accountability for trafficking in persons** by investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating trafficking and by providing effective legal remedies for the victims.
2. **Bring the national legislation on trafficking in persons in accordance with the Palermo Protocol and international human rights law** by, inter alia, amending the definition of trafficking, expanding the scope of protection and assistance to all victims without discrimination, and including a human rights based approach in the combat against trafficking in persons.

Thank you.