

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
14TH SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON UPR
UPR OF SWITZERLAND, 29 OCTOBER 2012

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA DELIVERED BY DR. UMUNNA H. ORJIAGO, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA TO UNOG

Madam President,

Nigeria warmly welcomes the delegation of Switzerland and thanks the Head of the Federal Dept. of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Didier Burkhalter, for the presentation of their national UPR report.

Nigeria notes that Switzerland has a unique participatory democracy which emphasises the direct involvement of the people and the cantons in national decision making, including constitutional amendments. Clearly, The Swiss Confederation is a country of laws, democracy and freedom. Nigeria therefore welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Swiss authorities to ensure that popular initiatives to amend the Swiss constitution are more compatible with international law. We are pleased to note that this will allow such initiatives to be declared null and void when they are in conflict with the peremptory norms of international law.

Madame President,

Nigeria also welcomes the acceptance by Switzerland of a number of recommendations made under the UPR including the establishment of the Swiss Resource Centre for Human Rights. We commend the Swiss authorities for granting Swiss residence permits to individuals whose repatriation would have constituted a violation of the principle of *non-refoulement* under the Convention Against Torture.

Madam President,

Nigeria appreciates the determination of the Swiss Federal authorities to take a more sympathetic approach towards resolving issues of irregular migrants. We recommend that the Federal authorities take closer interest in ensuring that the concerns of irregular migration are handled at the cantonal levels with similar empathy, in a manner consistent with the spirit of international human rights and humanitarian law. Repatriation should be done in more humane ways, and more sustainable solutions sought in close collaboration with the migrant-source countries. In this connection we urge Switzerland to sign the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of their Families

I thank you.
