**United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland**

**National Statement**

**Universal Periodic Review – Switzerland**

Thank you Madam President,

The rule of law and strength of democracy are strong in Switzerland, as are respect for human rights and tolerance. In this context, we would like to welcome the creation of the Swiss Resource Centre for Human Rights, which was set up in 2009 following the last Universal Periodic Review of Switzerland in 2008, and the associated five-year pilot programme to ensure its effectiveness.  The role of the ombudspersons, for example in Zürich, shows positive engagement and good practice and we hope that other cantons and cities would look to follow this approach to strengthen their engagement.

We would also like to welcome Switzerland’s action in relation to people trafficking, following the 2008 UPR. For example, we would like to highlight the positive and effective, ‘bilateral task force,’ that exists between Switzerland and Romania in tackling people trafficking, as well as the Swiss Government’s presentation on 18 October 2012 of its first National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking. This is a clear demonstration of how highly Switzerland considers the issue. In order to continue this positive momentum, we believe that further legislation is required to tackle the sexual exploitation of women and girls and ensure that victims receive the support that they need.

Following recommendations received in the 2008 UPR, we welcome Switzerland’s signature of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. We would encourage Switzerland now to ratify this convention, as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and to ensure that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are protected across Switzerland.

We have 2 recommendations:

1. Adopt and promote human trafficking legislation that focuses on the sexual exploitation of women and girls and provides full support to victims, and which factors in the role of cantons.
2. Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and ensure universal application of the Disabled Persons Equality Act across Switzerland by publicly promoting disability rights and the responsibilities of employers towards their disabled workforce.

Thank you Madam President.