



UK Mission to the
United Nations
in Geneva

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(7)

United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland Statement

Universal Periodic Review – Botswana

Thank you Mr President.

The United Kingdom welcomes Botswana's engagement in this UPR process and continued leadership in the Human Rights Council. We are pleased by the positive progress in several areas since 2008, including children's rights, prison conditions and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Whilst encouraged by Botswana's commitments regarding social equality and non-discrimination, we are disappointed that homosexuality remains criminalised and hope that rights organisation LEGABIBO is permitted to register.

It is regrettable that Botswana remains amongst a small minority of countries who continue to apply the Death Penalty and that final decisions on execution are not transparent.

The 2009 visit by the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples was a positive step but a negotiated and sustainable agreement between the Government and San residents of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve does not appear close. We hope progress can be made as a matter of urgency.

We also urge closer attention be paid to women's rights. A recent Botswana High Court judgement exposed conflict between some traditional laws and constitutionally guaranteed gender equality. Violence against women remains at worryingly high levels.

We therefore recommend:

1. Improved transparency of the clemency process in death penalty cases by making public the reasons behind decisions and providing a timetable for hearings.
2. Urgent implementation of measures to improve the reporting rate of gender based violence, where the NGO Genderlinks estimates only 1 in 24 incidents are currently reported; and to increase the prosecution of perpetrators.