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STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA
Review of France
15th Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council
21 January – 1 February 2013

Thank you Mr. President,

Malaysia welcomes the delegation of France led by H.E. Francis Zimeray to the 15th Session of the UPR Working Group of the Human Rights Council and thank the delegation for their presentation of its national report.

2. My delegation takes note of the various measures that have been undertaken by the Government of France to implement the accepted recommendations from its review in the first cycle of UPR particularly on enforcing existing anti-discrimination legislation to further protect and promote human rights in the country.
3. Despite the above efforts, my delegation notes with concern that France still faces the challenges of racism, intolerance and xenophobic attitudes towards non-citizens and other minorities. We are also concerned with the xenophobic approach utilised in the election campaigns, bordering on incitement of racial and religious hatred.
4. Further, my delegation is concerned with the implementation of Act No. 2004/228, which effectively prohibits students wearing "conspicuous" religious symbols from attending public schools. We are also concerned with the rise of racist acts in France, as reported by the National Consultative Committee on Human Rights (CNCDH), directed at persons of Northwest African origin and Muslims in particular.
5. Based on the above concerns, my delegation would like to propose the following two recommendations for the consideration of France:

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- 5.1. to take more effective measures to combat racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia against minority groups in the country, in particular prejudice against the Muslims; and
- 5.2. to consider revising its law prohibiting people from wearing religious symbols in public schools.

I thank you, Mr. President.

GENEVA
21 January 2013