

UPR 15: France
Statement of New Zealand
Delivered by Alana Messent, 21 January 2013

New Zealand thanks France for its comprehensive report and its on-going commitment to the international human rights framework.

New Zealand commends the establishment of a Minister of Women's Rights in May 2012 and the high priority that this government has attached to combating violence against women. New Zealand would be interested to learn more about the concrete steps that this Minister will take in their role to coordinate government action in combating violence and discrimination against LGBT people.

We note that concerns persist over the impact of the law banning facial coverings in public spaces. This is particularly relevant in terms of the potential negative impact on the participation of immigrant women in French society, and the on-going reports of xenophobic and discriminatory acts against persons of Northwest African origin and Muslims. New Zealand **recommends** that the French Government undertake a comprehensive study of the repercussions of this ban for immigrant women and the effect on their access to public services.

New Zealand is pleased to see the establishment of the Office of the Controller-General of Places of Deprivation of Liberty as the national mechanism for the prevention of torture, and the overall progress made in that area. We note, nonetheless, that a number of historical cases of ill-treatment in custody remain unresolved and on-going allegations against law enforcement officials continue to be made. New Zealand **recommends** that the French Government ensures that all serious allegations of ill-treatment are investigated promptly through independent inquiries.