

Mali. UPR

Denmark welcomes the delegation of Mali to Geneva and would like to thank them for their comprehensive presentation given here today.

Denmark shares the concern expressed by Mali in its report regarding human rights abuses in areas controlled by Islamist rebels in Northern Mali, where a cruel version of Sharia law is promoted. However, Denmark notes with great concern that equally serious human rights abuses in Southern Mali such as kidnappings, arbitrary arrests, torture, and enforced disappearances, go unmentioned. Impunity for such abuses is widespread, especially within the security forces. The report should be better balanced and should reflect these violations accordingly.

During Mali's first UPR in 2008, Denmark addressed the issue of the new family code. Although significant improvements have been made in the time between, the code in its present form contains elements that are in contradiction with CEDAW to which Mali is a state party. Explicit confirmation of women's formal subjugation to men and the lowering of the minimum age of marriage for women to 16 years are elements of particular concern. Furthermore, implementation of the new family code is not uniform throughout Mali, including in southern Mali where the government has full control.

- Denmark therefore **recommends** that the family code is revised to be fully aligned with international human rights standards, including with women's rights as set out in CEDAW.

The independence of Mali's National Human Rights Commission is established by law. However, the Commission is economically dependent on the Ministry of Justice, and its true independence therefore remains questionable.

- Denmark **recommends** that a revision of the Commission's independence, including its economic independence, is undertaken in order to bring the Commission's legal foundation de facto into compliance with the Paris Principles.