

Hungary's Statement on Tonga, UPR 15th Session, 21 January 2013

Mr President,

Hungary welcomes the distinguished delegation of the Kingdom of Tonga to this UPR session and would like to commend the Government for its thorough and inclusive method for the preparation of the national UPR report. We note with satisfaction the many progressive developments in the Kingdom: among them the first democratic elections held in 2010; the increased participation of women in the implementation of the first ever Freedom of Information Policy of the Government and the incorporation of international human rights standards into the curricula of the law enforcement training agencies.

Hungary welcomes the steps taken to ensure gender equality in education and health care, and recently in the field of employment. Nevertheless women are still discriminated against in land holding and inheritance. Therefore we **recommend** that Tonga develop a more gender balanced land ownership law, building on the recommendation of its Royal Land Commission regarding town allotment.

Hungary welcomes the fact that Tonga signed the CRPD, and pays increasing attention to persons with disabilities. Hungary has benefitted from the CRPD Committee's expertise as a body considering individual communications as well as monitoring implementation of the Convention. Therefore we **recommend** Tonga to ratify both the CRPD and its Optional Protocol before the next UPR cycle. We also would believe it would be useful to involve relevant NGO's in drafting and implementing disability related policies of the Government.

Finally, we appreciate that during its first UPR review Tonga committed to ratify the Convention against Torture and that its Supreme Court has already recognized that the prohibition of torture is part of customary international law. Still, we think that ratifying the CAT would add momentum to the fight against torture in the region. We would like to remind the distinguished Delegation that further to recent UPR recommendations, the islands of Nauru and Vanuatu became parties to the Convention. This may help Tonga to gain valuable information regarding the implementation of the CAT by other Pacific Island States, thus facilitating its own accession to this fundamental human rights instrument.

Thank you Mr. President.