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16th Session Universal Periodic Review

CANADA

Statement by Sierra Leone

Ambassador
Yvette Stevens

Mr. President,

Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Sierra Leone would like to commend Canada for its tireless efforts to promote human rights in general and for its achievements since the last Universal Periodic Review and for the presentation here this morning, in particular.

During the period under review, Canada has disseminated widely among public officials, within provinces and with civil society and Parliament the outcomes of the first UPR. In addition, it addressed some of the concerns expressed in the first cycle of the UPR in relation to indigenous peoples by strengthening relationship with Aboriginal peoples through commitment to a Joint Action Plan with the Assembly of First Nations, announced in January 2012, supporting the United Nations Declaration of Rights of indigenous Peoples, and declaring public recognition and apologies for historic events involving Aboriginal peoples and Metis and addressing issues relating to land claims, health and wellbeing education and socio-economic development of Aboriginal peoples.

Furthermore it undertook criminal law reform and awareness campaigns to better protect women and children, drew up a National Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, ratified the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and put in place policies and initiatives relating to poverty reduction, employment support for vulnerable groups, and housing, older persons. Other issues addressed include combatting racism ^{and} xenophobia and immigration.

Sierra Leone, having reviewed the various reports, would have the following recommendations to make for the consideration of Canada:

- Resolve outstanding commitments with the human rights mechanisms and special procedures through the preparation of outstanding reports and the facilitation of requested visits of three Special Rapporteurs;
- Continue to address the problems relating to minority groups including aboriginal peoples, Metis and African Canadians, as identified in the first cycle of the UPR;
- Take steps to increase its Official Development Assistance to developing countries which now stands at 0.3 per cent of GDP, to the agreed 0.7 per cent to assist developing countries in meeting their human rights goals.

Sierra Leone wishes Canada well in its efforts to improve human rights.

I thank you.