

**16<sup>th</sup> session: Universal Periodic Review**  
**New Zealand's statement during the UPR of Colombia**  
**Delivered by Alana Messent, 23 April 2013**

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Thank you Mr President.

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New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage with Colombia on its human rights situation and we thank the delegation for submitting such a comprehensive national report.

The Government of Colombia is clearly committed to advancing the promotion and protection of human rights; and against a challenging backdrop of the prevailing internal armed conflict, New Zealand commends the significant progress achieved to that end. The establishment of the National System of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the national human rights information system are two positive manifestations of that goal.

Notwithstanding the Government's efforts to curb the negative impacts of armed conflict, New Zealand remains concerned that indigenous peoples and peoples of African descent continue to suffer attacks by different armed actors and are being displaced in high numbers. New Zealand **recommends** the Government of Colombia take all necessary measures to ensure the full and sustainable protection of indigenous peoples and peoples of African descent, in terms of both physical security and land rights.

New Zealand commends the Government's increased attention to women's sexual and reproductive rights, as demonstrated by the creation of an intersectoral commission to promote and safeguard sexual and reproductive rights. We also see the ruling of the Constitutional Court that abortion is legal in certain circumstances as an important advancement for women's rights. Despite these positive steps, New Zealand is concerned by reports that some health service providers and medical professionals are refusing to perform legal abortions. We **recommend** the Government of Colombia take immediate action to ensure that health providers and medical professionals act in full conformity with the Constitutional Court ruling decriminalising abortion in certain circumstances.

Thank you.