



PERMANENT MISSION OF SLOVENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA

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UPR of BELIZE

Mr. President,

Slovenia welcomes the distinguished delegation of Belize in the Working Group on the UPR and would like to thank Belize for its national report. We welcome Belize's commitment to the UPR process.

Women's rights and gender equality are important issues and we are pleased to note that the revised *National Gender Policy* was approved by the Belize Cabinet in March 2013.

We welcome Belize's commitment to tackle the problem of domestic violence and progress made by the implementation of *Domestic Violence Act 2007*. However, challenges remain and reports on domestic violence against women continue. We would like to **recommend** to the Government of Belize to continue strengthening its efforts to provide the office of the Ombudsman with sufficient resources to enable it to effectively carry out its tasks.

We are pleased to note that the *Education and Training Act* has been adopted in 2010 introducing a prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. We also welcome the issuing of a *Positive Discipline Manual* in order to promote alternative discipline in schools as well as extensive public debate to promote greater awareness. However, concerns remain as the corporal punishment continues to be lawful under the Criminal Code. We would like to **recommend** to Belize to amend the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code in order to achieve the full prohibition of all forms of corporal punishment, including at home.

We regret to hear that in reporting to the treaty bodies not much progress has been made. We recognize the difficulties Belize is facing with the lack of resources. However, we believe that Belize needs to properly address the challenges and capacity gaps in the reporting system without delay and would therefore like to **recommend** to the Government of Belize to strengthen the capacities of its reporting system (clear mandates, sufficient staff members, appropriate training of the staff members, etc.) in order to tackle its backlog in reporting to treaty bodies.

Thank you.