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**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA**

**STATEMENT BY TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO - UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF BELIZE**

**PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA, 28 OCTOBER 2013**

Mr. President,

Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the Delegation of Belize headed by the Honourable \_\_\_\_\_ and wishes to express appreciation for the comprehensive National Report submitted to the Working Group.

As a colleague member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Trinidad and Tobago has long enjoyed a cordial and fraternal relationship with Belize. We are therefore also very seized of the peculiar challenges that attend Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that derive from the confluence of unique biophysical, geological and economic characteristics germane to SIDS worldwide.

It is against this backdrop that my delegation notes with satisfaction that Belize has nonetheless taken key steps since its last UPR to enhance its framework for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Among these are:

- The revision of the National Gender Policy that was approved by Cabinet in March 2013;
- The amendment of the *Marriage Act* in 2005 to increase the minimum age of marriage;
- The passage of the *Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Prohibition Act* in January 2013;
- The development of the National Youth Policy 2012 that seeks to develop programmes that create an enabling environment for Belizean youth to become more empowered as noted in the National Report;
- Undertaking a legal review to ensure consistency of domestic legislation with the National HIV policy which is geared toward modifying relevant sections of laws that are discriminatory and will lead to the introduction of new laws to protect the rights of persons living with HIV.

Mr. President, my delegation further recommends the following measures:

1. That the Government of Belize continues in its endeavours in consistently addressing the issues affecting indigenous peoples;

2. That the Government of Belize strengthen its efforts to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

I thank you Mr. President and I take this opportunity to extend best wishes to the Delegation of Belize for their review.