

UPR 17th SESSION
COUNTRY UNDER REVIEW: BELIZE

Intervention by Turkey

Thank you Mr. President,

We would like to welcome the delegation of Belize and thank them for this detailed and objective presentation.

We are pleased to observe that the Government of Belize has taken the mainstreaming of human rights within the national policy framework as a fundamental principle. In this respect, we commend Belize's adopting "respect for the rule of law and for human rights" as a guiding principle as its long term development strategy, namely "Horizon 2030".

We also understand that Belize, has made significant progress in implementing the recommendations submitted in the first round of the UPR.

Particularly, the developments that have been achieved in the area of women's rights and gender issues are noteworthy. The approval of the Revised National Gender Policy, in March 2013, constitutes an important step in the way of achieving gender equality.

The establishment of the monitoring mechanism named "Belize Gender Info" system is also a commendable step. We believe that the proper functioning of the system, can be an important asset not only for the Revised National Policy, but also for Belize's fulfillment of its international obligations regarding the women rights and gender issues.

We understand that Belize is has been under the pressure of influx of migrants. This has brought the burden of effective endeavor against human trafficking. In this respect, we welcome the adoption of the Trafficking in Persons Prohibition Act, which foresees more rigid penalties for the crime of human trafficking, in 2013.

On the other hand, we are well aware of the constraints that Belize is facing with regards to the full implementation of its commitments and obligations emanating from the human rights treaties and conventions to which it is a party. Nevertheless, we believe that the International

Legal Affairs Department that has been established within the Attorney General Ministry is an important step to overcome these constraints. Moreover, we consider this step commendable as Belize's sincere commitment to implement the said obligations.

Having Belize's commitment to implement its treaty obligations in mind, we would like to **recommend** the Government of Belize to provide the Ombudsperson with sufficient resources it needs, as a critical institution to monitor and oversee the respect for human rights.

I thank you Mr. President.