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PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL
GENEVA

Statement by His Excellency Ambassador Pedro Nuno Bártolo
Permanent Representative of Portugal
17th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
Central African Republic

Mr. President,

Portugal thanks the Delegation of Central African Republic for the presentation of Central African Republic's national UPR report, highlighting progress achieved on human rights issues.

Allow me to address, in particular, some of the recommendations conveyed by Portugal to the Central African Republic in 2009.

Firstly, while noting that the death penalty is not effectively applied, we reiterate our recommendation to the Central African Republic to abolish death penalty and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and duly eliminate provisions concerning the capital punishment from the national criminal law.

Secondly, we recommend the Central African Republic to urgently address the grave violations committed against children, including sexual violence, recruitment of child soldiers and the use of children as human-shields during the conflict. While welcoming the ratification, in June 2012, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Portugal recommends that the Central African Republic ratifies the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. We also recommend the signature and ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

Thirdly, we would like to recommend that Central African Republic ratifies the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR.

Finally, Portugal welcomes the establishment in May 2013 of a Joint Commission of Inquiry to investigate Human Rights Violations and recommends that the Central African Republic authorities fight against impunity and ensure that those responsible for the serious Human Rights violations and acts of violence perpetrated against the civilian population, including sexual violence against women and children, torture and summary executions, are brought to justice and held accountable.

Thank you Mr President.