

UPR17/Central African Republic
Statement by Slovakia
25 October 2013

Mr President,

Slovakia thanks the delegation of the Central African Republic for the comprehensive summary of the human rights situation in their country.

The Central African Republic faces challenging situation which deserves assistance and support of the international community. We encourage the Government to full and effective cooperation with the Human Rights Council Special Procedures, including recently established Independent Expert.

Reports on cases of enrolment of child soldiers raise our serious concerns. While taking note of the signature of the **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict** by the CAR we recommend its early **ratification and full implementation.**

Protection of vulnerable groups, in particular women and children should be addressed as a matter of priority. We are concerned about continuous reports of sexual and gender-based violence and **recommend the Government to take all measures to ensure protection of women and girls from violence and to end impunity of perpetrators of crimes.** In addition to amendment to the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure currently under preparation, what further measures are envisaged by the Government to address sexual violence against women and girls, including awareness-raising activities?

Finally, we recommend to step up efforts aimed at combating and eradicating FGM and other traditional harmful practices.

Thank you.