

**Italian intervention**

**UPR – Congo  
(30/10/2013)**

Thank you, Mister President.

Italy welcomes the distinguished delegation of Congo to the UPR Working Group.

Italy commends Congo for the positive results achieved since the previous cycle of the UPR in some areas of human rights, concerning *inter alia* the percentage of children registered at birth and the legislation on indigenous peoples. We encourage Congo to continue its effort to reduce the gap that still exists in birth registration and the issuing of birth certificates especially for indigenous children and other vulnerable groups.

Italy highly values the importance of the longstanding moratorium on executions that Congo has applied for more than thirty years. Welcoming Congo's support to the last General Assembly resolution on this subject, Italy would like to reiterate its **recommendation** that Congo take into consideration the possibility to amend its criminal code in order to abolish the death penalty.

Italy notes with concern that violence against women, in particular domestic and sexual violence, is still a widespread problem in the country. Furthermore, according to reliable reports, refugee women and girls are often victims of discriminatory practices, as well as sexual and gender-based violence within their communities. While commending all the measures already taken to tackle such forms of violence, Italy **recommends** Congo to:

- put into effect a more comprehensive approach to protect women and girls from any form of violence, especially by increasing measures aimed at preventing abuses and assisting victims;
- intensify its effort to prevent incidents of sexual and gender-based violence within refugee communities and convict the perpetrators of such crimes.

Italy shares the concerns expressed also by CEDAW regarding both the discriminatory legal provisions on marriage and family relations, and the negative impact of harmful traditional practices on girls' education. Italy would be interested in learning which initiatives Congo has envisaged in order to address such problems.

I thank you, Mr. President