

Italian intervention

**UPR –Israel
(29/10/2013)**

Thank you, Mister President.

Italy warmly welcomes the distinguished delegation of Israeli to this UPR Working Group session. The UPR constitutes a unique opportunity for all countries to review and discuss publicly the internal situation of human rights. UPR is also a remarkable mechanism of international cooperation focused on human rights to be preserved as such. In this view, Italy proposes the following comments, questions and recommendations.

Italy commends Israel for its close cooperation with UNICEF concerning children in military detention, as well as for the steps taken in order to address some of UNICEF recommendations. Recalling the importance of protecting the rights of the child under any circumstances and without discrimination, we would be interested in knowing which measures Israel intend to take so as to achieve a more accurate implementation of the “Convention on the Rights the Child” and “the Israeli law on Youth” in the West Bank.

Italy notes with concern that differences still remain in the enjoyment of human rights between the Arab minorities, African immigrants, including asylum-seekers, and the rest of the Israeli population. In this respect, how does Israel intend to improve the social and economic conditions of those minorities? Furthermore, how does Israel envisage to enhance the participation of the Bedouin communities in the decision making process affecting their tradition and socio-cultural peculiarities?

Italy appreciates that Israel has explicitly condemned the episodes of vandalism against mosques, churches and other Christian and Muslim religious symbols. In this regard, Italy **recommends** Israel to intensify efforts to prevent and tackle any act aimed at reducing or impeding the full enjoyment of the freedom of religion for any individual, including through proper educational programmes and interreligious

dialogue. Furthermore, Italy **recommends** that Israel deploy further efforts to ensure for all clergymen, religious women and men without discrimination the access to holy sites, also by lifting unnecessary restrictions in issuing visas for members of the clergy in the exercise of their religious duties.

Thank you, Mr President