



## **SIERRA LEONE**

### **Universal Periodic Review Second Cycle - Malta**

#### **STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR YVETTE STEVENS**

**Mr. President,**

My Delegation extends a cordial welcome to the Delegation of Malta and wishes to congratulate Malta on compiling and presenting a comprehensive national report.

Sierra Leone commends the progress made since the first UPR in 2009 including the appointment of a Minister for Civil Liberties; establishment of specialized national institutions to protect vulnerable groups; signing and/or ratifying a number of key international legal instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Sierra Leone applauds the efforts made by Government of Malta to address racism and discrimination including the project on raising awareness against racial discrimination. Commendable work has also been accomplished in addressing the right to development through the National Reform Programme.

Sierra Leone would like to make the following recommendations to Malta:

- Establishes a National Human Rights Institution fully compliant with Paris Principles;
- Provide the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality with adequate human, technical and financial capacity to handle racial violence and discrimination to institute legal proceedings;
- Widen the mandate of the Parliamentary Ombudsman to address racial discrimination in public and private entities;
- Develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy to address all forms of violence against women and children;
- Take steps to increase the minimum age of marriage from 16 to 18 years;

- Ensure birth registration for all children born in Malta.

Finally, Sierra Leone would like to urge Malta to undertake asylum status determination for all migrants to ascertain their eligibility for international protection consistent with relevant refugee conventions.

Sierra Leone wishes Malta well in undertaking its human right obligations.

I thank you.