



SIERRA LEONE

Universal Periodic Review Second Cycle – Nigeria

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR YVETTE STEVENS

Mr. President,

Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Sierra Leone would like to commend Nigeria for its efforts and achievements since the last Universal Periodic Review in 2009. The fact that between 2009 and 2013, Nigeria has acceded to several international human rights instruments, notably the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes of Genocide, the Optional Protocol of the Convention Against Torture in 2010; and that Nigeria has ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

Despite positive progress, steps still need to be taken. Sierra Leone makes the following recommendations:

- Enact national legislation to translate the ratified international treaties into national law;
- Take steps to ensure that basic human rights principles are respected within all elements its pluralistic legal system;
- Adopt measures to address the high rate of early marriages among girls in the northern states of Nigeria, including a review of legislation permitting marriage of those under 18 years of age and undertaking awareness raising programs on the negative implications of early marriage.
- Intensify efforts aimed at instituting inter-religious dialogue between elders and religious leaders, including in areas not yet affected by religious unrest. Consider holding a national conference on religious tolerance.

Sierra Leone wishes Nigeria well.

I thank you.