

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

GENEVA

The 17th Session of UPR Working Group <*Check against delivery*>

Review of Saudi Arabia

Geneva, 21 October, 2013

**Statement of the Republic of Korea**

Mr. President,

My delegation commends the achievements made by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the promotion and protection of women’s rights. The designation of 30 women in the Shura Council, which accounts for 20 % of all the Council seats, demonstrates significant progress that deserves our attention. My delegation is also pleased to highlight that more women are being employed in the government sector. It is also noteworthy that programmes have been introduced to promote the employment of women in various private sectors including women’s shops.

In addition, we welcome the Cabinet decision to allow equal opportunities for children of women married to non-Saudi nationals in the fields of education, medical services and employment. The decision reflects the Kingdom’s efforts to eliminate discrimination against women and foreigners.

Furthermore, we extend our congratulations on the opening of KAICIID dialogue centre in Vienna in 2012 at the initiative of the Kingdom. We believe that the centre will contribute to bridging interreligious and intercultural differences through dialogue and enhancing mutual respect as well as conciliation among religions.

In the hope that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will continue to build upon the current achievements, my delegation would like to draw its attention to a few issues.

First, as my delegation already expressed during the 1st UPR session, the concerns regarding the practice of male guardianship over women are still to be fully addressed. We therefore, recommend that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continue to make efforts to abolish the practice. Also we recommend again that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia put forward its utmost efforts to become a party to core international human rights treaties such as the ICESCR, ICCPR and OP-CEDAW. Finally, considering that the practice of sponsorship for foreigners can give rise to serious human rights violations of foreign workers, we recommend that the Kingdom give due attention to this issue.

Thank you. Mr. President. /End/