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Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Cecilia B. Rebong
Permanent Representative of the Philippines
to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva

Human Rights Council
18th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

UPR of COMOROS
31 January 2014

Thank you Mister President. The Philippines joins other delegations in extending a warm welcome to the delegation of the Union of the Comoros to this UPR Working Group session and the presentation of its national report. The constructive engagement of Comoros in the UPR and other mechanisms of the Human Rights Council is a testament to its steadfast commitment to human rights.

We recognize the efforts exerted by Comoros to implement the recommendations it has accepted in the first UPR cycle.

We appreciate the steps taken by Comoros to strengthen its national laws and public policies in order to provide enhanced protection and greater access to education and health care services to women and girls, and to better address human trafficking and child labor concerns.

We commend Comoros for its determination to advance the cause of human rights in the face of numerous challenges, not only financially, but also in terms of human resource and technical capabilities.

The Philippines encourages Comoros to continue to work on improving the country's institutional and legislative framework, in line with international human rights standards. We urge Comoros to consider speeding up the process of amending its Criminal Code.

Mister President, despite numerous challenges faced by Comoros, my delegation is confident that Comoros will remain focused on the protection and promotion of the rights of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and will continue to fulfill the social and economic rights of its citizens. We **recommend** that Comoros strengthens its cooperation with its development partners and various UN entities, as a way to facilitate the implementation of its socio-economic programs and implement the recommendations that it will accept in its second UPR.

In conclusion, we fully support the call of Comoros for international assistance to facilitate the full realization of the human rights of its people. Thank you Mister President. END