



**Universal Periodic Review of the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC , 5 February 2014  
Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the **Dominican Republic** to the UPR's 18<sup>th</sup> session. We thank the Dominican Republic for the national report and for the additional information shared with us today. We positively note the involvement of civil society in the preparations of the report.

Estonia recognizes with appreciation that the Government of the Dominican Republic has taken a number of positive steps in implementing the previous review's recommendations. We welcome the accession to the Rome Statute of the ICC and the ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Herewith we would like to stress that their full Implementation remains a key.

Estonia acknowledges the progress made in promoting women's rights. We commend the government for the steps taken in guaranteeing gender equality and combating violence against women and girls, including through the National Gender Equality and Equity Plan 2007-2017 and the Strategic Plan for the Prevention, Detection, Support and Punishment of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. However, the issue of violence against women is still of great concern and needs further efforts. Estonia invites the government to provide all the relevant administrative structures with adequate funding in order to guarantee effective fulfillment of the laws and plans.

Estonia remains concerned of unnecessary and excessive use of force by police. We invite the Dominican Republic to seriously tackle the issue of human rights violations by police and security forces and ensure that all allegations of human rights abuses by the security forces are investigated in a timely, thorough and impartial manner, and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

We positively note the endeavours of Dominican government in strengthening the education system and encourage the government to do its utmost to achieve universal free primary education without any discrimination throughout the country.

Finally, Estonia would like to make **the following 5 recommendations:**

- to ratify the Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute;
- to ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;
- to ratify the OP-CAT (Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture) and to take policy measures to prevent torture and ill treatment;
- to decriminalize defamation in line with international standards;
- to reform the Criminal Code to ensure that women and girls seeking termination of pregnancy are not subject to criminal sanctions and that health professionals are not criminalized for providing safe termination of pregnancy.

We would like to wish the delegation of the Dominican Republic a successful review meeting.

Thank you!