



*Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office
and other International Organizations in Geneva
Ch. Louis-Dunant, 15 - 1202 - Geneva / Switzerland
Phone: (+41) (0)22 332 50 00 / Fax: (+41) (0)22 910 07 51 E-mail:
mission.brazil@delbrasgen.org*

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Slovakia**

Brazil welcomes the delegation of Slovakia to the second cycle of the UPR.

Brazil acknowledges the significant improvements made by Slovakia on issues such as the protection of the rights of the child, in particular the zero tolerance approach concerning physical punishment of children and the programs to combat sexual exploitation under the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family, which were recommendations by Brazil at the last UPR cycle.

We encourage the Slovakian Government to persevere in this positive path by taking the necessary measures to fully incorporate Slovakia's obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography into its national legal order.

We were also pleased to learn about the launching, in January 2012, of the Strategy for Roma Integration up to 2020 and of the endorsement of the Committee for the Rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual persons, by the Slovakian Government, in October 2012.

Brazil would like to acknowledge the Slovakian Government's programs to fight poverty and social exclusion, and encourages Slovakia to pay particular attention to unemployment, with regard especially to women, youths and marginalized or unprivileged groups.

Brazil recommends Slovakia to step up its efforts towards not only advancing these specific courses of action in its Government's struggle against discrimination, but also to promote campaigns for tolerance and respect for diversity aimed at all segments of Slovakian society.

At last, Brazil would be pleased to know if the Strategy for Roma Integration foresees mechanisms to stimulate the enrolment of Roma children in regular schools. As a challenge shared by many countries around the globe, Brazil would also be pleased to know about any policies or actions implemented by Slovakia in order to promote gender equality in the workforce.

I thank you, Mr. President.

