

UPR, Vietnam, 28 January 2014

Intervention by Denmark

Mr President.

Denmark thanks the Vietnamese delegation for their presentation today. We welcome the progress made within social and economic rights but remain concerned about restrictions placed on the freedom of expression, notably the detentions, arrests and imprisonments of peaceful activists and bloggers.

Denmark **recommends** that the Government of Vietnam repeals or amends ambiguous provisions relating to national security in the Penal Code, to avoid those provisions being applied in an arbitrary manner to stifle legitimate and peaceful dissent, debate and freedom of expression.

We welcome the amended Constitution from 2013, which places a greater emphasis on human rights and on the rule of law. Still, we remain concerned about the low level of legal representation in criminal cases.

Denmark therefore **recommends** that the Government of Vietnam ensures that efficient procedures and responsive mechanisms for effective and equal access to lawyers are provided for in all stages of legal proceedings.

Finally, Denmark **recommends** the Government of Vietnam to take the necessary steps for a timely ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment.

Thank you, Mr President