

Check against delivery

18th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group (27 January-7 February 2014)

**Statement by H. E. Mr. Rytis Paulauskas,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Lithuania
at the review of Viet Nam
5 February 2014**

Mr. President,

Lithuania welcomes the esteemed delegation of Viet Nam and thanks for the informative National Report. We congratulate Viet Nam on the membership in the Human Rights Council and commend its engagement with the special procedures mandate holders since the previous UPR.

We note a number of developments with regard to the application of the death penalty, notably the reduced number of crimes punishable by death as well as the cessation of the application of the capital punishment to juvenile offenders. At the same time, we remain concerned about the increased number of people being sentenced to death. In this regard, we recommend Viet Nam to establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition, and in the meantime, to ensure full compliance in all death penalty cases with international fair trial standards.

Lithuania is concerned about severe restrictions on exercise of the right to freedom of assembly, as well as the reported harassment of human rights defenders, journalists and internet users advocating for human rights. In this regard, Lithuania recommends to Viet Nam to take all necessary actions to respect and promote the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association in line with its international human rights obligations.

I thank you.