

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 Yemen
29 January 2014**

Mr. President,

Lithuania welcomes the esteemed delegation of Yemen and thanks for the informative National Report.

We congratulate the successful conclusion of the National Dialogue. This has closed an essential first phase in Yemen's transition, implemented on the basis of the 2011 Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative. We also commend positive engagement of the country with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms and the inauguration of the OHCHR Office in 2013.

We note the efforts by the Government to eliminate discrimination against women. At the same time, we remain concerned about the widespread violations of women's rights, including honour killings and forced marriages. In this regard, we recommend Yemen 1) to take measures to protect women and girls from domestic violence, and to ensure that acts of such violence are fully investigated and those responsible are held accountable; 2) to ensure that forced marriages are prohibited in all cases.

Lithuania notes with concern that in the last years Yemen has continued to execute juvenile offenders although during its previous UPR it had accepted the respective recommendations not to impose death penalty for offenses committed by persons below 18. In this regard, Lithuania recommends Yemen to establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition, and in the meantime, to immediately stop imposing the death penalty on anyone under the age of 18.

Lastly, we are concerned about the rising incidences of assaults on journalists and bloggers by both government authorities and nongovernmental groups. In this regard, we recommend Yemen 1) to ensure prompt and effective investigation of intimidation and threats against journalists, 2) to take steps to guarantee and promote freedom of expression and 3) to amend the Press and Publication Act by repealing provisions that curtail journalists' rights and prescribe excessive penalties.

I thank you.