



Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
19th Session of the Universal Periodic Review
Review of Bhutan - 30 April 2014

Mr. President,

My delegation extends a warm welcome to the delegation of Bhutan to the UPR Working Group led byand thanks them for its comprehensive national report and the presentation this afternoon.

Sri Lanka acknowledges the progress made by Bhutan in the follow up to its first UPR, especially in the area of developing child protection interventions and institutionalizing capacity building on child rights. We also welcome the enactment of Bhutan's Domestic Violence Prevention Act in 2013 which is comprehensive in its scope and coverage.

We are encouraged by the sustained progress made by Bhutan towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We note that the country remains on track to achieving most of its MDG goals and targets by 2015 or even earlier.

Poverty rates in Bhutan have decreased to 12 per cent after the successful completion of the 10th Five Year Plan 2008-2013 and Bhutan has successfully reduced acute malnutrition and underweight children to targeted levels. However, there remain several challenges that could affect the meeting of the MDGs in their entirety and with equity, such as food and nutritional security for distant communities and chronic malnutrition affecting around a third of all Bhutanese children. **We recommend that Bhutan continue to strengthen measures to achieve progress in the areas identified in its national development plan, through appropriate means.**

Bhutan is recognised internationally for its strong commitment to environment conservation. The government has placed environmental conservation at the core of its development strategy. All major development initiatives are evaluated thoroughly in terms of their environmental impact. **We recommend that Bhutan continue to strengthen its efforts in environmental conservation, which contributes towards global efforts at safeguarding the common heritage of humankind.**

As a fellow South Asian country and a close friend of Bhutan, we wish Bhutan success in its UPR engagement.

Thank you.