

Deema Asfour

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**Statement by the State of Palestine at the Universal Periodic Review of Bhutan,
30th April 2014**

Thank you Mr. President,

The State of Palestine welcomes the delegation of Bhutan to the second cycle of the UPR and thanks it for the presentation of its national report.

We commend the efforts made by the Government to implement most of the recommendations that emanated from the first UPR cycle.

We welcome Bhutan's effort in ensuring that democracy takes firm root in the country. However, some challenges still remain, and in this regard **we recommend the Government of Bhutan to continue developing a longstanding democratic culture including by guaranteeing the participation of women in decision making and to put more efforts in strengthening accountability.**

We also acknowledge the drop of overall unemployment rate, however, concerns still remain as youth unemployment rate is higher than the national average, which put them at risk and could lead to range of social problems. **We recommend the Government of Bhutan to review and address gaps in education and training policies and outline strategies to ensure employment growth, improve working conditions and provide equal opportunities.**

We wish Bhutan every success to continue in ensuring promotion and protection of human rights of its people.

Thank you Mr. President