

**SIERRA LEONE**

**19th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

Brunei Darussalam

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR YVETTE STEVENS**

2 May 2014

Mr. President,

Sierra Leone welcomes the delegation of Brunei Darussalam and would like to thank it for the presentation of its national report which offers a comprehensive overview of the efforts taken by the government to address human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the participation in regional ASEAN human-rights related mechanisms.

Brunei Darussalam is a good example of how a country can be transformed economically as a result of its natural resources. Through the exploitation of its oil and natural gas, the country increased its economic performance since the nineties, and according to IMF it was ranked 5th in the world in terms of per capita GDP in 2013. My delegation is therefore pleased to note, from the National Report, that steps have been taken to more adequately ensure the distribution of such wealth to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

My delegation notes the steps that have been taken to implement the accepted recommendations of the first UPR cycle, but is concerned about recent developments in the country. The first phase of the Sharia Law proclaimed in October 2013, foresees prosecutions for, *inter alia*, failing to attend Friday prayers, or having a child out of wedlock. The new criminal code, which was announced by the Sultan on 30 April 2014, reportedly includes the death sentence, including death by stoning, for crimes, such as rape, sodomy and extra-marital sexual relations. Sierra Leone would like to know whether non-Muslims will be subjected to all the provisions of this law.

Recommendations

* Brunei Darussalam should ratify core human rights treaties the ICCPR, ICESCR, and the CAT and ensure that their provisions are respected in national legislation.
* Brunei should ratify the CRC, which it signed since 2008 and submit its outstanding report, address more intensively the problem of child trafficking, as well as increase of the age of criminal responsibility, which is now fixed at 7 years, to conform to international standards.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone would like to request whether Brunei, as one of the richest countries in the world, has reached, or intends to reach, the targeted 0.7 per cent of GNI to overseas development assistance thus, contributing to the achievement of human rights in poor countries.

Sierra Leone wishes Brunei Darussalam well.

Mr. President,

I thank you.