



**Statement by H.E. Rhoda M. Jackson
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of
the Commonwealth of The Bahamas
19th Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
Geneva, Switzerland
Review of Costa Rica
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Thank you Mr. President,

My delegation warmly welcomes the delegation of Costa Rica to its second Universal Periodic Review.

The Bahamas is pleased to have this opportunity to speak today as Costa Rica is a fellow member of the GRULAC. Costa Rica's National Report reflects the fact that it is a country with a strong commitment to the promotion of human rights, striving to ensure tangible benefits from the exercise of these rights by its citizens.

The Bahamas commends the Government of Costa Rica for establishing in 2011 an Inter-Institutional Commission on Follow-Up and Compliance with International Human Rights Obligations (CIIDDHH), and a Permanent Body for Consultation with Civil Society (EPCSC).

The Bahamas is pleased to see that Costa Rica has taken measures to secure access to justice for vulnerable people and groups through the establishment of The National Commission on the Improved Administration of Justice, and the Access to Justice Commission. One result of this work is improved access to justice for minors through a judicial initiative adopted in November 2010, which aims to eliminate discrimination or restrictions that stand in the way of the exercise of minors' rights.

Further, with the creation by the National Women's Institute (INAMU) of the High Level Commission, which monitors compliance with the amended Violence against Women Act, great strides have been made with respect to violence against women. It is important to note that the Act now criminalizes the abuse and assault of women.

The Bahamas welcomes the acknowledgment by Costa Rica that there is still work to be done with respect to indigenous peoples and persons of African descent, and encourages the development of policies and initiatives to secure the rights of these groups.

The Bahamas congratulates Costa Rica on the promulgation of the Trafficking in Persons Act and the Establishment of a National Coalition against Smuggling of Migrants and Human Trafficking. Costa Rica is also to be commended on the amendment to the Criminal Code now making it an offence to advertise Costa Rica as sexual exploitation haven.

The Bahamas wishes Costa Rica a successful second Universal Periodic Review.

Mr President,

I thank you.