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Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
20th Session of the Universal Periodic Review
Review of Plurinational State of Bolivia- 28 October 2014

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka warmly welcomes the delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia led byto the UPR Working Group. We thank the Bolivarian delegation for its comprehensive national report and the presentation this afternoon. We congratulate Bolivia for the achievements and the progress made in its follow up to its first UPR. We are pleased to note that Bolivia has fulfilled the 10 voluntary commitments made during the first universal periodic review.

We congratulate Bolivia for achieving the first Millennium Development Goal, enabling some 2 million people to overcome extreme poverty. We are encouraged by Bolivia's steady economic growth rate of 6.8 per cent in 2013, which is the third highest in the region. We also take note of the appointment of a new Ombudsman by the Plurinational Legislative Assembly for the period 2010-2016, which has been accredited with "A" status for its compliance with the Paris Principles, and the completion of the first phase of its National Human Rights Action Plan.

We are also encouraged by concerted efforts of the Government of Bolivia to develop the health and education sectors. In this regard, we take special note of the national health system, which offers universal health insurance for mothers and children and free medical insurance for older persons, provision of free education at all levels, including higher education. We commend the increased investment on education and efforts such as providing additional grant to best students, called "Excelencia en bachillerato" (Outstanding Achievement in Secondary Education), intended to encourage adolescents to study, especially in rural areas.

Sri Lanka commends the legislative and administrative steps Bolivia has taken to ensure the economic and social development of women as well as providing for equal access to political rights. We are encouraged by the initiatives by the Government such as the National Programme for Combating Gender-based Violence, strengthen the fight against discrimination and violence against women. We also take note of the priority given by the Government to provide comprehensive protection to the rights of children and adolescents, through the Plurinational Plan for Infants, Children and Adolescents 2014-2025.

Sri Lanka wishes to make the following recommendations to Bolivia:

1. Further strengthen measures to protect children from all forms of violence;
2. Intensify ongoing actions to eliminate discrimination against women at all levels in the society.

Finally, we wish Bolivia success in its UPR engagement.

Thank you.