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PHILIPPINES

Statement delivered by

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and other International Organizations in Geneva

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Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

Human Rights Council

UPR of FIJI

29 October 2014

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Philippines extends a warm welcome to the delegation of Fiji and thanks HE Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, for the presentation of Fiji's second UPR report. Fiji's active engagement in the UPR process illustrates its commitment to improve the overall human rights situation in the country. We note the significant changes in the legal and normative framework of Fiji, which strengthened democratic processes in the country, and provided increased protection for the vulnerable members of the population, such as women and children.

We appreciate that Fiji's new Constitution guarantees not only civil and political rights but also socio-economic rights such as the right to education, water, housing and access to transportation. We note that Fiji is one of the few countries that guarantee subsistence rights in its Constitutional Bill of Rights. We are interested to know if the resources needed for Fiji's programs aimed at realizing these rights are incorporated into country's annual budget. We are also interested to learn how Fiji's development partners can support Government efforts in this regard.

We welcome Fiji's intention to ratify the UN Convention Against Torture in the near future and the Government's commitment to work towards future accession to other international human rights instruments.

Noting remaining challenges faced by Fiji in the administration of justice, my delegation would be interested to know what are some of the barriers experienced by Fiji in the functioning of its judiciary and how can the international community assist in ensuring the independence and strength of Fiji's judicial system. We **recommend** that Fiji enhance its cooperation with UN human rights bodies and other regional/international partners, particularly in providing the police force with appropriate training in contemporary custodial and interrogation techniques in accordance with international human rights standards.

Thank you, Mr. President.