



PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL
GENEVA

20th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group
(27 October – 7 November 2014)

Statement by Portugal

Gambia

Mr. President,

Portugal welcomes the Delegation of Gambia and thanks for the presentation of the national UPR report concerning the human rights situation in the country.

Portugal welcomes the steps towards the creation of a National Human Rights Institution and recommends the finalization of this work and the establishment of a NHRI in full compliance with the Paris Principles (A status).

Portugal is deeply worried by the report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions referring to a number of executions that took place in 2012 after a moratorium on the death penalty was established 27 years ago. Portugal notes that a *de facto* moratorium was reinstated in 2013 and recommends to the Government of Gambia to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and to abolish the death penalty.

We welcome the Government's commitment to increase the enrolment in primary education, including of girls, while noting that serious shortcomings still remain concerning the drop-out rates. We would like to ask the Delegation if it can provide further information on measures envisaged to address this problem, especially concerning the high drop-out rate of girls.

We also recommend that Gambia adopts a National Action Plan on Security Council Resolution on Women Peace and Security (1325).

Portugal is concerned with the impact of last year's amendments to the Criminal Code in the area of "false information" and recommends that Gambia review these amendments in order to guarantee respect for freedom of the media and freedom of expression.

Portugal encourages the Government of Gambia to accede to the international treaties on human rights and therefore recommends that Gambia ratifies the Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol; the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) on Children and Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol to the CRC on a Communications Procedure; and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Finally, Portugal recommends that Gambia ratifies the UNESCO Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination in Education.

Thank you Mr President.