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**Statement delivered by South Africa**

**20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**

**Review of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**01 November 2014**

***Check against delivery***

Mr President,

South Africa welcomes the delegation of Iran led by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Javad Ardeshir Larijani and the presentation of the country's National Report.

We recognise the pivotal and influential role played by Iran in its region as well as internationally including the establishment of the NAM Centre for Human Rights and Cultural Diversity. We also appreciate the national efforts to embrace diversity and commends the strides made by Iran in the advancement of socio-economic rights, particularly in the field of education and health and encourage further progress in this regard.

South Africa recommends the following:

(1) that Iran strengthen measures to promote women's economic and political participation in the country.

(2) congratulates Iran on the Appointment of a Special Assistant for Ethnic Groups and Religious Minorities and **recommends** that Iran strengthens measures aimed at the protection of Religious Minorities in accordance with Article 13 and 14 of its Constitution.

(3) Finally, we welcome progress on the establishment of the National Human Rights Institution and **recommend** that Iran proceed with the Bill for its establishment.

We wish the delegation of Iran a very successful review for the Session.

I thank you.