

20th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group  
27 October - 7 November 2014  
**Madagascar**

Statement by Portugal

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Mr. President,

Portugal welcomes the delegation of Madagascar and thanks it for the presentation of the national UPR report concerning the human rights situation in the country.

Portugal welcomes that since the last review Madagascar extended a Standing Invitation to the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Portugal also welcomes that since the last review Madagascar signed the Second Optional Protocol to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, and recommends its ratification.

Portugal further welcomes the recent creation of the Independent National Human Rights Commission and recommends that Madagascar proceed with its accreditation as the NHRI, in accordance with the Paris Principles, with A status.

Regarding the rights of the child, Portugal welcomes positive developments, namely the creation of the National Child Protection Committee as well as progress concerning the right to nationality. However, reports on the increasing sexual exploitation of children, as well as on prevailing traditional practises of violence against children, including the abandonment of twins, are of great concern. Portugal would like to ask the Malagasy delegation if it can provide additional information on that regard and recommends the adoption of the necessary measures to address these issues, as a matter of priority, including at the level of accountability.

We also recommend Madagascar to adopt a National Action Plan on Security Council Resolution on Women Peace and Security (1325) and to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, while further persevering with renewed impetus in the overall improvement of women's rights in the country, including through the eradication of discriminatory customs, practices and cultural stereotypes and by fostering women empowerment through the abolition of legal and practical limitations to women's full and unimpeded access to economic resources.

Portugal further recommends that Madagascar considers developing Human Rights Indicators as suggested by the OHCHR as an instrument that allows for a more precise and coherent evaluation of national human rights policies.

Finally, we strongly encourage Madagascar to accede to the international instruments on human rights and therefore recommend that Madagascar ratify the Optional Protocol to International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Thank you Mr. President.