



**Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Belarus**

*Delivered by HE Ambassador Jan Knutsson,  
Geneva, May 4, 2015*

**Mr President,**

*Sweden welcomes the delegation from Belarus to the UPR.*

*Sweden is deeply concerned that Belarus remains the sole country in Europe that continues to exercise the death penalty. After a "pause" in 2013 when no executions were carried out, three persons were executed in 2014. Executions in Belarus are non-public events and the locations are not disclosed. Relatives are neither handed the body of an executed person, nor informed about the site of burial.*

*Sweden recommends Belarus to accede to the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.*

*Sweden further recommends Belarus to abolish the capital punishment, and as an interim measure, to introduce a moratorium on the death penalty.*

*In 2014, Belarus enacted new legislation increasing state control over the internet. Among other provisions, it was made illegal to spread information "encouraging extremist activities" and information that harms the interest of the state. If requested by authorities an internet site must erase information that the authorities deem "not trustworthy" and publish corrections. If the site refuses to do this, access to it can be blocked.*

*Sweden recommends Belarus to amend its legislation to guarantee that freedom of expression on the internet cannot be limited by the arbitrary decision of authorities.*

