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Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
22nd Session of the Universal Periodic Review
Review of Belarus - 04th May 2015

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka welcomes the delegation of Belarus and wishes to express our appreciation for the comprehensive statement presented today.

The UPR provides an appropriate mechanism to review human rights situations in countries through constructive dialogue, and open engagement. We note that Belarus has accepted 74 of the 93 recommendations made by Members and Observers of this Council during its first UPR cycle. We note the comprehensive consultation process it has carried out with various stakeholders including with the civil society and the OHCHR in preparation of the current session, and the on-going engagement with the UN Country Team (UNCT) to further the efforts on promotion and protection of human rights in Belarus.

We recognize the efforts taken by Belarus in safeguarding the socio-economic rights of its people, by incorporating and prioritizing Development into its national policies and programmes, including realization of MDGs, which has resulted in elevating Belarus to 53rd rank, in the 2014 Human Development index, of the UNDP. As a country which is practically well aware of the benefits of implementing a national policy on free education for all from primary to tertiary level, Sri Lanka commends the Constitutional guarantees established in Belarus on compulsory free education, and wishes to **recommend** that continued efforts to be made in expanding educational facilities to rural areas, and also to advance the educational and vocational training facilities for men and women equally.

While noting the on-going efforts in securing the rights of the child, Sri Lanka recommends Belarus to reactivate the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, and or establish an effective system of coordination for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

We welcome the continued and consistent efforts by Belarus to prevent human trafficking, including by promulgating the 'Trafficking in Persons Act' of 7 January 2012, and for protecting and rehabilitating the persons subjected to trafficking as "victims". We **recommend** Belarus to strengthen its work towards combating trafficking in persons with assistance from the relevant UN agencies and the international community, as deemed necessary.

In conclusion, we wish Belarus success in its UPR engagement.

Thank you.