

Universal Periodic Review of the Republic of Honduras

08 May 2015

Intervention by the Delegation of Estonia

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the Republic of Honduras to the UPR's 22nd session. We thank Honduras for their work in preparing the national report through dialogue with representatives of civil society and various other stakeholders, presented earlier, and also for the additional information given in the opening speech. The authorities have prepared a national report that generally reflects the human rights situation in the country.

We commend Honduras for several positive steps taken since the previous UPR, including the extension of a standing invitation to the UN Special Procedures and good cooperation with Treaty Bodies. Estonia encourages Honduras to continue efforts to become part of all the main international human rights instruments.

We note some positive steps in the field of education, for example the new Education Act establishes that education is free of charge and compulsory up to secondary school. Also we welcome the adoption of a special plan to increase budget allocations for education.

Estonia would like to commend the National Action Plan on Racism and Racial Discrimination currently being drawn up. We are concerned that indigenous and Afro-Honduran women continue to face multiple forms of discrimination; we suggest Honduras to include a gender perspective in all policies and strategies against racial discrimination. We encourage Honduras to protect women's rights, to guarantee gender equality and the protection of women from violence.

We are concerned about attempts to silence journalists and human rights defenders through legal measures, problematic regulation of the media and restrictions of the right to access information. We invite Honduras to ensure that human rights defenders can freely carry out their activities without unfair restrictions or fear of reprisals, and make authorities at all levels fully aware of the international standards that protect them, including the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Estonia would like to make **the following recommendations** to the Government of Honduras:

- to take **decisive** steps to combat with criminal impunity
- to fully align its national legislation with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC); **to cooperate promptly and fully with the International Criminal Court** and to investigate and prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes effectively before its national courts
- to respect and protect the **right to freedom of expression**; to strengthen the protection of journalists, civil society activists and human rights defenders against attacks
- to improve the precarious situation of **Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendent communities**, to protect human rights, including by ensuring their actual access to health, education and other essential services; to take measures to prevent human rights violations

and abuses against Indigenous and *Garifuna* communities and their leaders and ensure that such violations and abuses are investigated and punished

We would like to wish the delegation of Honduras a successful review meeting.

Thank You!