



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Liberia

*Delivered by Minister-Counsellor Josefin Simonsson Brodén
Geneva, May 4, 2015 (speaking time 1 min 35 sec)*

Mr President,

Sweden wishes to welcome the delegation and express our thanks for the information related to our advance questions.

Sweden recognizes that the Government of Liberia has taken steps to address the issue of gender-based violence through i.e. the adoption of a National Plan on gender based violence, as well as the adoption of Standards Operating Procedures for access to gender based violence services. However, there remains a high incidence of sexual and gender based violence in Liberia. Rape against women and girls remains prevalent.

Even though female genital mutilation has lessened due to the ban of Sande societies and the risks associated with the Ebola epidemic, it is still not illegal and continues to be practiced.

The UN General Assembly has called on States to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty. In 2008 Liberia reintroduced the death penalty, with the passing of a bill making armed robbery, terrorism and hijacking capital offenses where they result in death. This was made in contravention of Liberia's obligation under the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Liberia acceded in 2005. Sweden welcomes the de facto moratorium on executions.

Sweden recommends the Government of Liberia:

- 1) to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by women and girls, including through public awareness raising and measures to improve investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence;
- 2) to enact legislation and increase awareness raising prohibiting FGM;
- 3) to abolish the death penalty and commute without delay all death sentences to terms of imprisonment.

Thank you, Mr. President