

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 22ND SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON
THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW – STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE
DELEGATION OF GHANA AT THE SECOND CYCLE REVIEW OF MALAWI
TUESDAY 5 MAY 2015**

Thank you Mr. President,

The delegation of Ghana warmly welcomes the presence and participation of the distinguished delegation of Malawi in the second cycle UPR process. Ghana applauds Malawi for having undergone two peaceful political processes since its last review in 2010.

Ghana notes with satisfaction the passing of the Gender Equality Act which seeks to prohibit harmful traditional practices, gender-based violence, sex discrimination and sexual harassment. This notwithstanding, Ghana remains concerned that there are still laws that discriminate against women and therefore recommends that these discriminatory laws be amended and where possible repealed. Ghana further recommends that the implementation guidelines for the Gender Equality Act be developed promptly to ensure its effectiveness.

Ghana also shares the concerns raised by United Nations country team regarding the rather slow review processes of certain policies and legislative instruments, particularly the Witchcraft Act. Ghana therefore recommends an expedited approach by the Malawian Law Commission towards the repeal of the Witchcraft Act. Ghana further recommends that the Commission fast tracks the enactment of the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill and related legislative instruments to ensure harmonisation on the age of marriage.

Ghana further wishes to make the following recommendations for the consideration of Malawi:

- Decriminalise defamation and incorporate into the Civil Code
- Submit overdue reports to the Human rights treaty bodies
- Issue standing invitations to all special procedures
- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (**ICPPED**) and Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (**ICRMW**)
- Ensure strict compliance of laws relating to gender-based violence

Finally, Ghana calls for the continued support of the relevant UN Agencies in assisting and guiding Malawi to realise the promotion and protection of the human rights of all persons in the country.

Mr. President, I thank you.