



Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès  
des institutions spécialisées à Genève

**WG UPR 21 – United States of America**  
***Belgian Intervention***  
May 2015

The principled opposition of Belgium against the death penalty is well known to the US delegation. We commend the USA for the ongoing intense internal debate on the matter. We particularly appreciate the reality that, while a majority of States still have death penalty on the books, in practice its administration is declining. However we **recommend** that specific measures be taken in follow up to the recommendations of the Human rights Committee to the US in 2014 with regards to capital punishment, such as measures to avoid racial bias, to avoid wrongful sentencing to death and to provide adequate compensation if wrongful sentencing happens.

Turning now to the question of sexual and reproductive health in the US foreign cooperation programs we would like to hear from the delegation of the USA why the administration opposes all support for abortion services in its foreign-assistance programs, including in the cases of women and girls who are raped and become pregnant in situations of armed conflict, and in the case of women and girls facing life-threatening pregnancies? My delegation **recommends** that the US allows foreign assistance to support safe abortion services, where legal in the host country. This should apply as a minimum in the cases of rape, incest and life endangerment, as is also permitted by existing US federal law.

Finally Mr. Chairman, Belgium attaches great importance to rights of the child and referring to reports on health hazards for children working as harvesters on farms we **recommend** the removal of the agriculture exemption in the Fair Labor Standards Act which would raise the age for harvesting and hazardous work for hired children, taking care to distinguish between farm owner and farm worker children.