



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Mauritania

*Delivered by Minister-Counsellor Josefin Simonsson Brodén  
Geneva, November 3, 2015 (speaking time 1 min 25 sec)*

Mr President,

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

Sweden is concerned about the reports that reveal regular use of torture and ill-treatment by the security forces against individual prisoners. Further, that there are no laws that protect lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons from discrimination in Mauritania. Same-sex sexual activity between men is punishable by death. In December 2013 Mauritania decided to adopt laws of criminalizing slavery, and Mauritania also created a special tribunal to hear slavery cases. However, the implementation in practice remains poor. Sweden is concerned about the fact that women have fewer legal rights than men. Reported and unreported rape continues to be high in Mauritania.

Sweden recommends to the Government of Mauritania the following:

- 1) to take further measures to end the use of torture and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment, and ensure that allegations of torture, ill-treatment or excessive use of force by police and security forces are investigated, prosecuted and convicted in line with international standards.
- 2) to ensure that the death penalty is not applied to consensual same-sex relations between adults, and that the Penal Code does not criminalise such activity, and to include sexual orientation and gender identity in non-discrimination laws and programmes, and to promote tolerance and non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or identity in line with the Yogyakarta principles.
- 3) to strengthen the national programs to eliminate slavery and take measures to ensure that complaints regarding slavery are taken seriously and are being brought before the domestic courts.
- 4) to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission and the national commission to combat gender-based violence, and the capacities needed to secure advancement in the field of human rights, particularly in the area of

human rights of women as well as to increase efforts in order to ban such practices as female genital mutilation.

Thank you, Mr. President

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