

**SIERRA LEONE**

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Mr President,

Sierra Leone welcomes the delegation of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and thanks them for the update as detailed in their national report.

My delegation notes with appreciation the progress made as well as the efforts undertaken by the Government of Micronesia since its last review in 2010. In particular, we commend Micronesia for the signing into national law the (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children), Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012.

Similarly, Sierra Leone commends the government for guaranteeing gender parity in access to education. My delegation would however encourage the FSM to put in place legislation which ensures the minimum age of consent for marriage is the same for boys and girls, notably 18, and not 16 for girls and 18 for boys.

In addition, the Federated States of Micronesia should increase, as best possible, access of women to reproductive healthcare services, especially in all the rural communities.

Furthermore, while we applaud the various state laws on family protection, my delegation believes that standardizing national laws on domestic and sexual violence would be a more holistic way of effectively protecting women and children from these forms of violence.

Sierra Leone notes with interest the recent submission of their national report to the CEDAW Committee in June 2015. However, my delegation would encourage FSM to submit its overdue report to the CRC and to seek further technical assistance it requires in order to meet its OP-CRC-SC implementation objectives.

Sierra Leone would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Ratify the ICCPR and the other core international human rights instruments, as well as their optional protocols.
2. Establish federal legislation criminalising violence against women in all four states (only exists in Kosrea).
3. Put in place labour laws which would include a minimum age of employment and which protects children from commercial exploitation.

To conclude, Sierra Leone wishes the Federates States of Micronesia every success in completing this second cycle of its national review process. My delegation also takes this opportunity to wish Micronesia a Happy National Day tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr President.