



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Latvia

*Delivered by Dr Jannie Lilja, First Secretary
Geneva, January 26, 2016 (speaking time 1.40)*

Mr President,

Sweden wishes to welcome the delegation of Latvia and express our thanks for the information provided in response to our advance questions.

We welcome the steps taken by Latvia, which made possible the Protocol No 13 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms entering into force in 2012, thus completely abolishing the death penalty in Latvia. During the first cycle of the UPR Sweden had recommended Latvia to continue to work for the abolishment of the death penalty in all circumstances.

However, we note that the Latvian Ombudsman reports that several Latvian prisons – in particular custodies – are still severely congested. Apart from overcrowding, concerns include violence and threats among inmates, lack of medical care and lack of exercise for prisoners. Foreign detainees are not able to communicate with the prison staff, due to lacking language skills.

Sweden recommends the Government of Latvia to continue the efforts to address the issue of overcrowded prisons and take action to improve the conditions in prisons and detention centers.

Thank you Mr. President