



Statement by Sweden in the interactive dialogue on Namibia

*Delivered by Minister-Counsellor Josefin Simonsson Brodén
Geneva, January 18, 2016 (speaking time 1 min 15 sec)*

Mr President,

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

The Namibian Constitution provides a strong foundation for gender equality. It uses gender-neutral language, and it forbids discrimination on the basis of sex. Furthermore, the Namibian Constitution explicitly states that customary law is valid only when it does not conflict with the Constitution, meaning that customary law may not entail any form of discrimination on the basis of sex. According to the Legal Assistance Centre, one out of three women in Namibia has or will experience gender-based violence (GBV) in their lifetime.

Sweden welcomes the passing of the Child Care and Protection Act which includes provisions aimed at safeguarding children in prisons. Implementation of this legislation is of vital importance.

In relation to the conditions for prisoners in the country, Sweden is concerned about the fact that Namibia has not signed the OP-CAT.

Sweden recommends to the Government of Namibia:

- 1) to adopt and implement a national action plan on gender-based violence with the support from all sectors within the society, including the judiciary,
- 2) to adopt provisions to ensure that detained children are always held separately from adults,
- 3) to sign and ratify the OP-CAT (Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment).

Thank you, Mr. President