

**United Nations Human Rights Council**

**24th Session of the UPR Working Group**

**Geneva, 20 January 2016**

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**German questions and recommendations to the**

**Republic of Paraguay**

Mr President,

Alemania le da una cordial bienvenida a la delegación de la República del Paraguay y le agradece su presentación del reporte national.

We commend Paraguay’s important commitment to further improving its already well developed national human rights record as well as its creditable engagement in advancing international human rights policy. We also note with appreciation Paraguay’s dedication to introduce mechanisms to monitor the implementation of its international obligations and to prevent violations in sensitive areas of human rights, while sharing the experiences made thereby with the international community. We encourage Paraguay to further invest in these mechanisms to ensure effective and sustainable results for the cause of human rights. We further wish to commend Paraguay’s active participation in this Council.

The national report presented to this Council clearly demonstrates significant progress in a broad spectrum of human rights issues. To generate even further advancement, we would like to offer the following recommendations for action:

1. Germany reiterates its recommendation from the previous UPR and recommends the Government of Paraguay to develop a comprehensive and forgery-proof land registry to enable indigenous communities to hold legal titles to their ancestral land.
2. We further recommend the Government of Paraguay to ensure that impartial and independent investigations and criminal proceedings in accordance with existing law will be implemented, including for cases as the Marina Cué events in Curuguaty of June 2012 in order to clarify allegations and bring perpetrators to justice.
3. In the context of detention, we recommend the Government of Paraguay to strengthen existing police oversight mechanisms and to provide victims of torture and ill-treatment with compensation.
4. We recommend the Government of Paraguay to address deficiencies of the legal and policy system regarding the issue of pregnant children for better protecting young girls, as some of them had been forced to continue high-risk pregnancies with long-lasting impact on their physical and mental health.
5. Germany recommends the appointment of a new Ombudsman without further delay, after the mandate of the present incumbent expired 2008, while ensuring that the institution complies fully with the Paris Principles.

Thank you, Mr President.

**Questions in advance:**

1. In the previous UPR, Germany recommended the Government of Paraguay to develop a comprehensive and forgery-proof land registry to enable indigenous communities to hold legal titles to their ancestral land, a recommendation which the Government of Paraguay had referred to as “implemented or being in the process of implementation”. As of today, cases of conflicting legal land titles remain a problem for domestic as well as foreign investors in Paraguay. Legal insecurity affects small peasants as well as large scale land owners and indigenous peoples. Conflicts are often resolved by the law of the strongest or most influential, including land occupation, sometimes accompanied by destructive violence and physical harm. We would therefore like to enquire in which way the Government of Paraguay intends to address this issue and advance a forgery-proof land registry, ensuring legal certainty and equal opportunity to indigenous peoples, peasants as well as investors?
2. Legal and societal rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations committed during the former dictatorship in Paraguay remains an important precondition for the democratic well-being of all Paraguayans. Which measures is the Government of Paraguay taking to promote a culture of remembrance, e.g. in education and society in general?
3. Germany acknowledges remarkable progress achieved in the field of poverty reduction, in particular through the Government’s policy to combine targeted support with economic incentives to foster employment and combat the widespread shadow economy. In the same vein, we would like to enquire about the Government’s plans to raise investment in the education of the young generation, making primary and professional education more accessible to the neediest parts of the population, e.g. in rural areas and indigenous communities, and further improving its quality?
4. What are the Government’s plans to ensure efficient protection of human rights defenders, including journalists, some of them facing continued threats, harassment and even killing? In particular, we would like to call attention to those working against land confiscations, as well as journalists - seven of them were murdered from February 2014 to June 2015 - exposing drug trafficking and acts of organized crime? How does the Government ensure prosecution of crimes related to these issues?
5. Please provide information as to measures
- addressing the high level of overcrowding in prisons,
- bringing detention conditions in conformity with international standards
- reducing the backlog of criminal cases.