



CROATIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE

GENEVA

Statement by

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Ambassador

Permanent Representative

**Twenty-fourth Session of the Working
Group on the Universal Periodic Review**

Review of Sierra Leone

Geneva, 27 January 2016

Mr. President,

I would like to extend our **warm welcome** to the delegation of the Republic of Sierra Leone and thank them for the presentation of their report.

Croatia commends the adoption of the **Free Health Care (FHC)** initiative for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children of 5 years and under. This initiative is praiseworthy as it will ensure the accessibility and affordability of healthcare services for the citizens of Sierra Leone and therefore will contribute to better handling of maternal and child healthcare issues.

We would like to encourage the Government to intensify efforts to further **strengthen its legislative framework** to fight torture, inhuman and degrading treatments or punishments, as well as to ensure the adequate legal protection of women against violence.

Therefore, allow us to address you with two recommendations:

1. Ratify the **OPCAT** - Optional Protocol on the Convention Against Torture, Inhuman and Degrading Treatments or Punishments, following its signing of the 2003.
2. Accelerate the efforts directed towards ending harmful and traumatic practice of **female genital mutilation**.

Thank you.