

**SIERRA LEONE**

**25th Session of the UPR**

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

**STATEMENT BY SIERRA LEONE**

9 May 2016

Mr President,

Sierra Leone warmly welcomes the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda and thanks them for the oral update.

My delegation notes with appreciation the efforts made since their last review in 2011 including the various bills passed last November on children and gender issues.

Sierra Leone also notes with interest the de facto moratorium on the death penalty which has been in place for over 24 years and we hope that the government will again consider abolishing the death penalty in the near future. Also noteworthy is the adoption in 2013 of a national action plan to end gender-based violence.

Given the mixed migratory trends in the country, and in order to protect against the trafficking in persons, my delegation urges the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to establish a legislative framework on refugee protection and asylum. In addition, Sierra Leone would encourage Antigua and Barbuda to ratify ILO Conventions 169 and 189, and to accede to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

The government should furthermore consider abolishing corporal punishment as a sentence as established in the Corporal Punishment Act and take more effective steps to combat domestic violence as well as child sexual abuse.

While it is understandable that due to resource and technical constraints, Antigua and Barbuda struggled to submit, in a timely manner, its reports to the relevant treaty bodies, it would be crucial to engage with the OHCHR and other relevant UN organs in order to be able to do so in the future.

Sierra Leone makes the following recommendations:

1. Ratify the ICCPR, ICESCR, ICRMW and ICPPED.
2. Submit its overdue reports to CERD, CEDAW and CAT.
3. Establish measures and policies to encourage greater participation of girls in the higher education systems.
4. Seek the requisite technical assistance needed in order to meet its international human rights obligations.

In conclusion, Sierra Leone wishes Antigua and Barbuda every success in this UPR cycle.

Thank you, Mr President.