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Statement by Latvia on Sudan
25th Session of the UPR Working Group
May 2015

Mr. President,

Latvia warmly welcomes the distinguished delegation of Sudan to this UPR and thanks it for the presentation of the national report. We appreciate the efforts made by Sudan to ensure civil society consultation and participation in the preparation of its UPR and the submission of a mid-term implementation report. We welcome the progress made by Sudan, since its last UPR review, through legislative and institutional reforms but note with concern that parts of the legal framework infringe on fundamental rights and freedoms. We are in particular alarmed about the situation of women in Sudan, who suffer discrimination, underdevelopment and poverty, all of which are exacerbated by the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence. We are therefore pleased that Sudan facilitated a visit by the SR on Violence against woman in May 2015 and encourage the country to continue to make good use of the valuable expertise of Special Procedure mandate holders. Also, although Latvia positively notes the adoption of the Freedom of Information Act, we remain concerned about reports of media restrictions and censorship as well as alleged cases of intimidation, harassment and arrest of journalists and civil society activists and we hope that the government will act on its commitment to promote freedom of expression and encourage the publication of newspapers. In conclusion, we would like to offer the following recommendations to Sudan:

1. Extend a standing invitation to all Special Procedure Mandate holders
2. Ratify CEDAW, take all necessary measures to ensure a de facto and de jure equality between man and women and adopt a comprehensive national action plan which sets out clear goals and deadlines to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence and FGM
3. Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court to ensure accountability for, prevention of and justice for the victims of human rights violations.

Thank you.