

**Statement by Ms. Bernadette Butler
Minister-Counsellor
Permanent Mission of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva
The Republic of The Gambia**

**Third Cycle Universal Periodic Review**

**Geneva, Switzerland
5th November 2019**

Mr. President,

The Bahamas warmly welcomes the delegation of the Republic of the Gambia, to their Third Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

The Bahamas commends the Government of the Republic of the Gambia on its commitment to realizing the fundamental human rights of its citizens, by enacting key constitutional and legal reforms to bring its laws into harmony with its international obligations, as evidenced in its National Development Plan 2018-2021. The commitment to uphold the rule of law and undertake criminal justice reform in line with international best practices are also significant.

The Bahamas welcomes the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission; the reform of media laws to facilitate the exercise of the right to the freedom of expression; the abolition of female genital mutilation, in all its forms; and the criminalization of child marriage and child betrothal.

The Bahamas **recommends** that the Republic of the Gambia should:

1. Complete all internal procedures to enact the Disability Bill to provide statutory protections for the human rights of persons with disabilities;
2. Continue its national policy efforts to realize the participation of women and men in an equal and equitable manner in the economic, political and social spheres; and
3. Enact domestic legislation to bring all international human rights treaties into force.

We wish the Republic of the Gambia a successful Review.

I thank you.