

UPR of EQUATORIAL GUINEA – Interactive dialogue

(09 December; 0900 – 1200 h)

INTERVENTION BY INDIA

Mr. President,

India welcomes the delegation of Equatorial Guinea led by H.E. Salomon Nguema Owono; Vice Prime Minister; Social and Human Rights sector and thanks them for their informative national report, drawing attention to the numerous challenges and constraints that the country faces in securing the human rights of its citizens. In view of Equatorial Guinea's immense potential for economic development, India welcomes the country's visionary aim of transiting to an emerging economy by 2020 through the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan, with a special focus on institution-building, health and education sectors and related infrastructure. At the same time, it may be desirable to pursue the genuine exercise of human rights by ensuring that the human rights culture takes root in these new founded institutions, in public awareness and in civil society.

With 76.6% of its population still living in conditions of poverty, India commends the Government's initiative of addressing acute economic disparity by investing revenue generated through oil in poverty alleviation programmes . We welcome the recent judicial reforms, in particular, the Judiciary Act of 2009 which provides a clear structure for the judiciary, the Fees Act which has been instrumental in drastically reducing judicial fees for the lodging of applications and the setting up of courts in all districts, thereby ensuring greater access to justice. Nevertheless, we would like to be informed as to how the judiciary intends to reconcile customary law as applied in traditional courts with codified law.

India notes with appreciation that efforts have been stepped up to implement the country's Strategic Emergency and Multisectoral Plan against HIV/AIDS through the launch of a national forum, an extensive awareness-raising campaign to combat the pandemic and the provision of free anti-retroviral drugs. We congratulate Equatorial Guinea for having surpassed the targets set by the Abuja Declaration and Framework for Action for the Fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Diseases.

The Government's efforts to promote gender equality through initiatives such as Promotion of Self-Employment for Rural Women (PRAMUR) project, National Education Programme for Adult Women and the National Policy for the Advancement of Women are noteworthy. In this regard, we note with appreciation the growing

participation of women in politics and civil services, with them constituting 15% of the Government, 18 % of the judiciary, 33% of teaching staff and 65% of health personnel.

In conclusion, we are encouraged to learn of the Government's resolve to strengthen the human rights situation in the country by remaining committed to the full implementation of its ongoing reforms and we hope that the completion of the recent Presidential elections shall be a step forward in this regard. We wish the Government of Equatorial Guinea well in this endeavour.

Thank you, Mr. President.
