

UPR of PORTUGAL – INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

(4 December 2009; 0900-1200 hrs)

INTERVENTION BY INDIA

Mr. President,

India welcomes the delegation of Portugal led by H.E. Pedro Lourtie, Secretary of state for European Affairs, and thanks the delegation for its presentation and its informative National Report.

India's relations with Portugal have been characterised by a rich historical cultural legacy. We appreciate the consultations carried out by the Government with the civil society in preparation of its National Report and its commitment to continue the consultations during the follow-up phase after the UPR. We note the detailed information provided in the National Report about the Constitutional framework with regard to human rights, especially the economic, social and cultural rights, and the Government's policies and programmes aimed at social protection reforms. The Government's efforts at strengthening its gender equality policies and reforming its Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code are also noteworthy. CEDAW too has commended the country for adopting legislative amendments relating to, *inter alia*, social welfare system and penal law.

Mr President,

We would request the Portuguese delegation to share more information about, and its experience in implementation of, the Parity Law that establishes minimum quotas of 33% for each sex in electoral lists for European, national and local elections. We would also request for more information about the organisation, scope and functioning of the Observatory of Trafficking in Human Beings that has been referred to in the National Report.

Lastly, Mr President, while we acknowledge the important role played by the Ombudsman's office in Portugal, we would recommend that Portugal consider establishing a separate national human rights institution at the earliest. We would also recommend that it continue its efforts to strengthen a culture of tolerance to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the vulnerable groups.

Thank you, Mr. President.
