

UPR WORKING GROUP - NINTH SESSION

(01-12 November 2010)

UPR of LIBERIA- INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

01 November 2010

INTERVENTION BY INDIA

Mr. President,

India welcomes the delegation of Liberia led by H.E. COUNSELLOR CHRISTIANA TAM, HON. MINISTER OF JUSTICE and thanks the delegation for its informative National Report and presentation. We take positive note of the inclusive consultation process and the detailed methodology adopted by the Government in the preparation of its National Report. We acknowledge the constraints and challenges faced by the Government in securing the human rights of its people, even as Liberia is recovering from the lingering effects of two civil wars and related economic dislocation. It is notable that the elections of 2005 were successful in securing peace and stability, and resulted in a decisive victory for H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, making her the first woman to be elected president anywhere in Africa.

AND
ATTORNEY
GENERAL

We take positive note of a number of initiatives taken since 2005, both institutional, with regard to the establishment of the Governance Commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Anticorruption Commission and the Land Commission, as well as legislative, in respect of new laws adopted to review the civil and criminal procedure and ensure financial autonomy for the judiciary. Further, the establishment of a Human Rights Committee within the legislature to ensure that proposed bills comply with Liberia's international obligations, a Steering Committee

to develop and adopt a national human rights action plan and dedicated human rights units in the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Gender and Development, are all noteworthy developments.

Considering that more than half of Liberia's population is below the age of 20 years, it is of utmost importance that the Government focuses on its youth policy, both in terms of education as well as employment. In this regard, we are encouraged to learn about the re-launch of the Free and Compulsory Primary Education Program in 2006 and the Ministry of Labour's Apprenticeship and Job Programs. It is heartening to learn that the National Policy on Girls' Education has been instrumental in increasing girls' primary and secondary school enrolment rates, by 82% and 16% respectively, over the last five years. Further, we echo CEDAW's comments in appreciating Liberia's efforts to put in place the National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action (2006) and the National Rural Women's Program (2008).

The UN country team has noted the establishment in 2009 of a Law Reform Commission and a Constitutional Review Task Force. We would request the delegation for further information with regard to their work. We would also encourage the Government to ensure that the National Human Rights Commission, established by an Act in 2005, is made fully operational, independent and effective in the discharge of its mandate. While we take positive note of the establishment of a National Commission on Disabilities in 2005, we would recommend that the Government consider ratifying the CRPD, along with the two Optional Protocols to the CRC, to which it is a signatory.

We are encouraged to learn about the national priorities that Liberia has set out for itself at the end of its national report, in particular those related to enhancing human rights awareness among its public officials and its citizenry at large. We wish the Government of Liberia well in its endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. President.
