

## **UPR of Fiji**

**11 February 2010**  
**Statement by Norway**

Norway thanks the delegation of Fiji for the presentation of the National Report.

We would like to express grave concern about the human rights situation in Fiji. We call for, and recommend a return to constitutional rule, restoration of a democratic form of government, reinstatement of an independent judiciary, repeal of the Public Emergency Regulations, and reinstatement of full independence of the Human Rights Commission.

Norway considers effective cooperation with the UN fundamental to improving the human rights situation. We recommend that Fiji considers ratifying all outstanding Human Rights instruments of the UN, and improves its cooperation with the UN Treaty Bodies by agreeing on the timeliness for submitting overdue reports.

We recommend that Fiji considers favourably the request for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and find time in the near future for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers.

Norway believes that media is crucial for ensuring freedom of expression. We are deeply concerned about the extensive restrictions on the media in Fiji. We recommend Fiji to enforce a legal framework that allows media to operate freely and independently.

Norway strongly believes that human rights defenders are important for fostering a culture of human rights. We are concerned about the precarious working conditions of human rights defenders, partly as a result of the PER. We recommend that complaints of harassment, intimidation and arbitrary arrests of human rights defenders are effectively investigated and prosecuted, and those responsible punished.

We appreciate that Fiji is a State Party to the Convention on Elimination of Violence against Women and commend the recent submittal of reports, although overdue. But we are concerned about reports of high levels of violence and sexual abuse of girls and women. We recommend that Fiji in the near future adopts the proposed laws on domestic violence and sexual offences, thereby prohibiting practices that legalise violence against women.