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A voice at the United Nations



Oral Statement for 22nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council Item 6 of the Agenda: Consideration of UPR Report for Zambia

Thank you Mr. President.

Edmund Rice International and partners welcome the support by the government of Zambia for 70 recommendations and its consideration of another 54 recommendations from its second UPR, and its commitment to implementing them. We would like to express our views on four key human rights issues in Zambia.

We welcome Zambia's acceptance of eight recommendations promoting the rights of the child¹, two prioritising human rights education² and one addressing rural problems³. However, we draw the attention of the Human Rights Council to continued discrimination that leads to poor educational outcomes for rural children, children with disabilities, and other vulnerable children, including those affected by HIV/AIDS.

We also welcome the acceptance of recommendations 103.47⁴ and 103.62⁵ on the right to health. Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned that alcohol abuse among underage drinkers was not addressed during the 2nd UPR cycle. We further welcome the Zambia's acknowledgement of the impact of poverty on increased number of street children⁶ and its efforts to guarantee their rights as a step toward a sustainable solution on the problem of street children.

Finally, while welcoming the acceptance of recommendation 103.68, to “strengthen the governance of natural resources”, we urge Zambia to follow the new UN Guiding Principles⁷ on business and human rights that ensure governments protect human rights, corporations respect them, and victims can seek redress.

Therefore, we call on Zambia to:

- 1. Review inequalities in educational outcomes for children and implement policies which significantly reduce these, to ensure all children's right to education is respected;**
- 2. Implement the laws addressing alcohol abuse among underage drinkers;**
- 3. Draw up a National Action Plan to respect the rights of street children, using rights-based approach that aims to empower children and their families and expand their access to social services and health care;**
- 4. Assess the extent of environmental degradation, its economic cost, and its impact on human rights, and harmonise its current legislation and policies on environment management.**

¹ See A/HRC/WG.6/14/L.11 paras 103.13, 103.20, 103.21, 103.23, 103.24, 103.25, 103.26 and 103.33.

² Idem, paras 103.13, 103.15.

³ Idem, para 103.46.

⁴ Ensure progressive enjoyment of the right to health (Togo).

⁵ Pursue its efforts in the area of health and education (Senegal).

⁶ See UPR Zambia National report A/HRC/WG.6/14/ZMB/1, para 30.

⁷ See <http://www.business-humanrights.org/SpecialRepPortal/Home/Protect-Respect-Remedy-Framework/GuidingPrinciples>.