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UPR-Info Pre-sessions

Guyana

Geneva, 12th of December 2019

Slide 1. Intro

Dear Human Beings,

Mister/Madam President,

Dear delegation of Guyana

Excellency's and distinguished delegates,

Dear UPR-info staff,

Dear interns,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Did I include everyone and is everyone alright? Fair !

Good morning,

Slide 2. The primacy of life

Life!

In this very room.

The air we breathe, but also the knowledge and the feelings we share; our work, our hopes and our future.

The Center for Global Nonkilling works, using ethics, education, statistics and law to establish a measurable killing-free world.

Said simply: “change the habits of the past, *taking life*, into the conscience of the future: *affirming life*, universally”.

At the start of what shall be called the decade of consequences, the primacy of life and of its main legal tool, the right to life, is a commitment we must all undertake.

With, within our hearts and minds, two understandings:

First, regarding life, only prevention works. It is exemplary: they are no alternatives, no lives or no planet B: once life is lost it is irreparable.

Secondly, the right to life we are all entitled to is also a duty not kill. It includes the duty not kill our civilization, the duty to respect it, to make it thrive and prosper, for each and all. Our civilization is not better or worth more than the life of its weakest member.

Slide 3. Summary

To improve life here and everywhere, dear delegation of Guyana and dear States representatives, we ask of you:

1° A constitutional review.

2° To decriminalize suicide.

3° Some essential ratifications, the adoption of violence prevention plans,

4° And the immediate abolition of the death penalty.

Constitutional review

Slide 4. Commonwealth Countries

What is common to all these countries?

They are all ex-British colonies and they all use remnants of a model constitution containing this clause, or a similar one.

A clause that we would like to see changed worldwide.

Slide 5. Constitution of Guyana

As it is excessively permissive, this clause is contrary to international law.

There must a direct threat to justify any use of force, and such force, based on prevention, non-violence and proportionality principles should never result in maiming, nonetheless in killings.

Slide 6. HRtee. General comment on the right to life.

This clause is also immoral as it may seem to grant a permit to kill, where what is expected of all fundamental laws and public authorities is the exemplary promotion, protection, enhancement, and more than not reverence for life, celebration of life!

Slide 7. Recommendation to change the constitution.

Dear Guyana, please prepare a *participative and life enhancing* transformation of your society and of your constitution.

Recommendation

We urge the People and the Authorities of Guyana to inscribe, by a participative process, in their constitution, the primacy and the beauty of life, the full promotion and protection of the right to life, the abolition of the death penalty, strict life preserving limitations of any use of force and autonomous control therefore.

Slide 8. Situation of suicide.

Prevention of suicides

SDG3 (indicator 3.4.2) and the World Health Organisation list suicide among mental ailments; suicides can and must be prevented, it is an individual impediment to life and to the worth of life requiring prevention and support, quality of life and happiness, not repression.

Slide 9. SDG

Repression impedes prevention and reporting, but it also add unnecessary burdens on those in need of healing and reconciliation with life.

Here again, what is required is the celebration of life, of the good of life, not making life and prevention harder, by punishing those committing suicides.

Slide 10. Recommendation

Here again, dear Guyana, the law must urgently be changed.

Recommendation

Recognizing that suicide prevention is a full duty under the protection of the right to life and that persons attempting suicide need help rather than repression, we require of the Authorities of Guyana the urgent decriminalization of suicide.

Slide 11

Other recommendations

In international law, please ratify:

- The genocide convention (*2 noted recommendations, only 2nd cycle*)
- The enforced disappearances convention (*4 noted recommendations, 2=1, 1=3*).
- Second protocol of CCPR of death penalty

At the national level:

- Adopt violence and homicides prevention programs as demanded by WHO and as required by SDG 16.1
- Henceforth, abolish the death penalty and please commute all sentences (*20 recommendations in second cycle*).

Slide 12

Madam / Mister President, dear Friends, thank you for attention and for your participation, for and through the progresses of the rights to life and peace.

I wish you all a happy future and please ask many questions.

Welcome to Geneva and enjoy Switzerland.

ANNEXES

List of countries with an excessively permissive clause on killings

(not exhaustive, 23 countries):

Antigua and Barbuda	Ghana	St-Vincent and the
Bahamas	Grenada	Grenadines
Barbados	Kiribati	Samoa
Belize	Mauritius	Sierra Leone
Botswana	Nauru	Solomon Islands
Cyprus	New Guinea	Swaziland
Dominica	St-Kitts and Nevis	Tuvalu
Gambia (incl. draft 2019)	St-Lucia	Zambia

Clause of the constitution of Guyana in need of change

Article 138. PROTECTION OF RIGHT TO LIFE

1. No person shall be deprived of his or her life intentionally save ***in execution of the sentence of a court (...)***.
2. (...), a person shall not be regarded as having been deprived of his or her life in contravention of this article ***if he or she dies as the result of the use of force*** to such extent as is reasonably justifiable in the circumstances of the case-
 - a. for the *defence of any person from violence* or for the defence of property;
 - b. in order to effect *a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape* of a person lawfully detained;
 - c. for the purpose of *suppressing a riot, insurrection or mutiny*; or
 - d. in order to *prevent the commission* by that person of a criminal offence,
 or if he or she dies as the result of a *lawful act of war*.