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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports: Papua New Guinea

UN Human Rights Council
49th session
28 February – 1 April 2022

Mr President,

We welcome the Papua New Guinean (PNG) parliament abolishing the death penalty in January 2022.

We acknowledge efforts towards ending gender-based violence, but many challenges remain. Laws that hinder access to safe and legal abortion must be repealed, as well as laws that criminalise consensual sexual activity between adults. We encourage the government to end harmful cultural practices that violate the rights of women such as bride price, early and forced marriage and violence as a result of sorcery accusations.

Mr. President,

We remain concerned about the lack of access to adequate health care and health information. We urge the Government to ensure access to personal protective equipment, increase the vaccination rates and protect the safety of health care workers who have experienced recent violence from the community.

While there are some mechanisms to protect the right to a healthy environment, ambitious targets are needed to tackle climate change, phase out reliance on fossil fuels, and improve regulatory and enforcement frameworks for extractive industries. We encourage increased resources to the justice sector to tackle intercommunal violence that is often related to conflict over resources and land rights.

We urge the government to continue pursuing opportunities for the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers (under the bilateral agreement) to Australia or another safe third country, for all those who wish to do so.

Finally, we urge Papua New Guinea to submit a mid-term report on progress towards implementation of recommendations to the Human Rights Council and to use an Item 6 General Debate to draw it to the attention of Member States.

Thank you.