

UPR – DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

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- delivered by John Fisher, 17 March 2010

Thank you Mr. President, distinguished members of the delegation.

We welcome the constructive participation of the Dominican Republic in the UPR process. While we appreciate that a number of recommendations were accepted at the Working Group stage, we regret that the response of the government to more than 30 recommendations was still not available as of this morning, thus limiting the capacity of stakeholders to meaningfully engage in the report adoption process.

We commend the Dominican Republic for its support of the OAS resolution on sexual orientation, gender identity and human rights, adopted by consensus last year. This historic resolution commits governments of the region to ending human rights violations directed against persons because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

In keeping with that commitment, we urge the Dominican Republic to accept the recommendation by France to “take all necessary measures to put an end to discrimination against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals”. Specifically, we urge the government to include sexual orientation and gender identity in equality and nondiscrimination policies and programmes.

We note that stakeholders have expressed concern that negative public attitudes persist. We therefore recommend that public education and awareness programmes, including on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, be implemented, and that sensitivity training on these grounds be provided to law enforcement, judicial and other authorities.

Finally, we recommend that consideration be given to applying the *Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* as a guide to assist in policy development.

Thank you.