

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO JAMAICA – Add.2

SWEDEN

- In its national report to the UPR, the Government of Jamaica outlined measures it is taking to address diminished public confidence in the police, also summarising the number of complaints filed about alleged abuses by agents of the Jamaican State. Earlier this year, the Special Rapporteur on torture expressed concern about the rise of fatal shootings by the police, which were alleged to often amount to extrajudicial killings. The Rapporteur also stressed the apparent lack of investigation and accountability for those responsible in such unlawful killings. Human rights organisations, such as Amnesty International, have expressed concern, over the large number of people killed by the police every year. According to official statistics in 2007, 272 persons died as a result of use of force by the police; 224 were killed in 2008 and 253 in 2009. In most cases, the police forces assert that killings occur in the context of gang violence with gunmen. However, the high number of killings combined with eyewitness testimonies and other evidence, indicate that many of the killings involved excessive use of force by the police.

Could the Government of Jamaica elaborate on measures it is taking, beyond what it is mentioned in its national UPR report to reform the police, to investigate and bring to justice perpetrators within the police of alleged unlawful killings, ill-treatment or excessive use of force, as well as on its position with regard to ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment?

- Sweden is concerned by credible reports that underscore the criminalization of consensual sex between men in the Jamaica promotes a climate of prejudice in which discrimination, physical attacks and other abuses against people who are or believed to be homosexual, are likely to occur. Sweden is particularly concerned by reports of violence against persons perceived as homosexuals who are targeted because of their appearance or behaviour. Sweden is also concerned by the deteriorating situation for defenders of the rights of gay, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals, that have been subjected to physical violence, in some cases murdered; and the police have been criticised in many instances, by human rights organisations, for failing to prevent or respond to reports of such violence.

Could the Government of Jamaica elaborate on measures it its taking to put an end to and bring to justice perpetrators of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, as well as on any initiatives to repeal the law that forbids sexual activity between males and to promote tolerance and non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or identity in line with the Yogyakarta Principles?