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UPR El Salvador

International Educational Development, Inc. is pleased to address the Council regarding the UPR for El Salvador. We have worked on the situation in El Salvador at the UN since 1982 and visited the country nearly 20 times during the course of the armed conflict. We also note that the current government was elected and took office shortly before the UPR process began. Thus many of the documents and submissions do not reflect the actual situation. That said, the government of President Sanchez Ceren has moved forward in significant ways.

We first note new status of El Salvador's indigenous peoples and that sign language is now an official language of the country. We were very pleased with the voting process, and note with great pride that Salvadoran citizens voted in our home cities to the cheers of the local population.

In spite of great progress in ratifications and implementations of many human rights documents, there are significant problems in the country that will not be solved easily. First of all, the civil society has been marginalized for generations. While now we note the robust participation of all segments of society intent on creating a genuine democracy in the country, it will take many years to undo the damage and prevent frustration at the slow progress.

Secondly, we note the overwhelming power of the gangs in El Salvador – some of which originated in Los Angeles during the war. The threats to El Salvador's young people has resulted in the flight many unaccompanied youths to the United States where many are detained in camps. Resolving this will take the concerted efforts of the governments concerned and the High Commissioner for Refugees.