



Mister President,
Dear Roland,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good morning,
And for the ones travelling: welcome to Geneva,

It is a great and rare honor, for an international organization like ours, more over for an organization that is a rather young at the work on the UPR to be presenting here information about human rights in Samoa ... so we humbly thank UPR-Info for giving us this possibility.

The Center for Global Nonkilling, successor of the Center for Global Non-violence (1988-2009), was founded in 2010. We are a congregation of some 600 scholars or so working *“To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world, by means open to infinite human creativity, in reverence for life”*. We have ECOSOC special consultative status since 2014 and our scientific publications are available for free on our website.

It is also an honor to be able to present our work here, because we work on the right to life and so far, the right to life has not been given a lot of direct or comprehensive attention through the UPR process. Regarding the right to life, we recall that though all human rights are equal, the right to life precedes all other rights; if life is taken all other human rights are cancelled.

We also recall there are no possible limitations or restrictions to the right to life: one is either alive, or not. Issues pertaining to the beginning and the end of life such as reproductive rights, abortion, suicides and euthanasia, as well as prenatal and genetic engineering should be dealt with in a preventive, humane and sustainable manner, in full dignity. Similarly, the use of force should be either avoided or, or if not possible limited and outmost attention is to be given to prevent situations in which the use of force may result in harm or loss of life.

We also quote the Sustainable Development Goal, 16.1: *“To significantly reduce violence and related deaths everywhere”*.

We do want to know what policies Samoa will design and implement to fulfil that goal.

As we are still improving our reporting method, part of the information I am going to provide today is not in our submission. You will find copies of both this Statement and our submission on the table.

Presently, we have the means to do only one submission for each UPR session, so why Samoa? We have various criteria to make our choice; the info at our disposal, our local contacts if we have any or eventually the potentials the country may have to enhance and forward the right to life. Regarding Samoa one the decisive factor, I will talk about hereafter, was the fact that it has

no army. Peace by peaceful means is in our opinion a necessity to achieve full respect for the right to life.

But first, here is a detailed analysis of the situation of the right to life in Samoa.

First, we note with some sadness, that there is no regional human rights institution, or even no human rights treaty in the Pacific region.

We do recommend that such a treaty and an overseeing regional institution be established.

Recalling that though human rights are universal, such regional treaties have also been able to incorporate local specificities; I here especially think of custom.

The constitution protects the right to life, but though the death penalty was abolished in criminal law in 2004, it is still in the constitution.

So we recommend amending the constitution to take the death penalty out, but also to highlight the value of life in a more happy and dynamic way.

Ratification of the second optional protocol of the Covenant on civil and political rights on death penalty is recommended as well.

Living happily

Generally speaking, life is well respected, protected and promoted in Samoa. Talking about the right to life in Samoa may thereof seem subjective as they are so little accidental or intentional deaths. However, every life counts.

- a. Children are duly registered at birth, thus duly recognizing their living existence¹.
- b. Infant mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world².
- c. Abortion is safely monitored and not permitted on request only. However, compared to other similar European countries, rates are bit high³.
- d. Homicide rate is exemplarily low⁴.
- e. Traffic casualties are low as well⁵.
- f. Life expectancy is one of the best of the world⁶.
- g. Nevertheless suicide rates are too high⁷. We here recall that suicides amount to more than half of all violent deaths in the world⁸. Therefore preventing suicide is a primary task for the protection of the right to life.
- h. Similarly, efforts to prevent occupational fatalities⁹ and tourists from injuring themselves during outdoor activities need to be sustained and improved.
- i. Though a majority of the people seems to be favoring it (at least in a poll)¹⁰, assisted suicide is so far illegal¹¹.
- j. Prenatal and genetic engineering does not seem to be a trend or an issue in Iceland¹².

