



Geneva, June 9, 2011

(Thank you for giving me the floor)

Mr. President,

VIDES International welcomes the constructive participation of Paraguay at the Universal Periodic Review.

Nevertheless, VIDES remains concerned about the human rights situation of indigenous peoples and those living in rural areas. Disparities as well as discriminations against these vulnerable groups still persist with respect to access to basic social services, especially education.

While welcoming that recommendations concerning free education for all citizens and the improvement of literacy rate in indigenous and rural areas enjoy the support of Paraguay, VIDES is particularly concerned by the fact that only 41% of youth between ages 15 and 17 years have access to secondary education, due to the persistent of school enrolment fees. In addition, educational infrastructures are still concentrated in cities and especially the access to higher education is virtually non-existent in rural areas.

With regard to **quality of education**:

VIDES perceive major issues such as: first, several deficiencies in educational infrastructures, often lacking of water and electricity, teaching materials, food and uniforms; second, inadequate qualification of teachers, especially those working in rural and indigenous schools; third, bilingual education has not yet been fully achieved.

VIDES, therefore, recommends Paraguay:

- **Take all measures to integrate into the educational system children belonging to poorest and vulnerable groups, in particular those living in rural areas and indigenous children.**
- **Take all necessary measures to improve the quality of education.**

Thank you.