



CROATIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE

GENEVA

Statement by

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the Universal Periodic Review**

Review of Serbia

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I would like to start by extending a warm welcome to the delegation of the Republic of Serbia and to thank them for the presentation of their comprehensive report.

The Republic of Croatia welcomes Serbian efforts to implement the recommendations from the first UPR cycle, especially those of institutional and legislative changes in respect to the enforcement of the promotion and protection of national minorities rights - such as the establishment of the new **Council for National Minorities**, as well as the adoption of the **Law of National Councils of National Minorities** and the **Anti-Discrimination Law**.

- However, we would like to ask the Serbian authorities to explain which measures will be undertaken **to ensure the appropriate representation of national minorities in the judiciary, administration and police** as well as which concrete steps will **ensure its declared priority to further develop multiethnic and multicultural society**.

Croatia is still concerned about widespread discrimination against LGBT persons in the country. Serbian authorities should be ready to take steps to ensure adequate protection of the LGBT community, as well as the promotion of LGBT rights, through inter alia, enabling the Pride Parade to take place in the future.

- **In that regard, “safety concerns” should apply equally to all areas of public life.** If police protection can be ensured to allow high-risk football matches, could you please elaborate what would be the reason not to ensure the protection of the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly of the LGBT persons?

We would also like to commend Serbia for the recent important legislative change with regard to the **inclusion of the hate crime into the Penal Code**.

- In this light, we encourage Serbia **to further develop the concept of hate crime** and to **include a range of penalties for each crime committed on the basis of hatred** - with the aim to effectively prevent, combat and punish hate crime in practice as well as to eliminate all social prejudices.