**UPR 16 – Azerbaijan – 30 April 2013**

**STATEMENT by BULGARIA**

Thank you, Mr President,

Bulgaria welcomes the distinguished delegation of Azerbaijan to the second UPR cycle.

We congratulate Azerbaijan for its comprehensive second UPR report and view positively that it reflects information on implementation of the recommendations accepted during the first review, as well as information on recent achievements on the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

Bulgaria appreciates that the promotion and protection of human rights is a priority issue for the Government of Azerbaijan and that a National Programme for Action was approved to raise the effectiveness of the protection of human rights and freedoms.

We also note that after the first review Azerbaijan acceded to OPCAT (Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) and appointed a Commissioner on Human Rights (Ombudsman) as national preventive mechanism on 13 January 2009.

In the framework of the second cycle of the UPR, Bulgaria would like to recommend to Azerbaijan the following:

* To enhance the role of the Ombudsman and take measures providing for the effective implementation of its functions as national preventive mechanism in accordance with the Optional Protocol to CAT.

Thank you.