

Mr. President,

I would like to thank the delegation of the Republic of Colombia, led by, for the presentation of the national report and for its participation in the review process.

Since the first cycle, Slovakia acknowledges Colombia's efforts to strengthen the rule of law with a number of important initiatives pursued in the right direction recently. We welcome in particular the peace process initiated in August 2012 with a view to end the decades-long bitter internal conflict. Noteworthy is the adoption of the Act No. 1408 of 2010 concerning victims of enforced disappearance, establishing measures for their identification. At the same time, Slovakia commends Colombia for its mid-term report on the follow-up to the recommendations received during its UPR in 2008, as well as its support extended to the country's OHCHR office.

Slovakia would like to present Colombia the following recommendations:

- 1. to increase efforts in addressing violence against women, including a provision of access to justice and medical care for victims as well as their social reintegration, in particular within the context of the armed conflict.** We have taken a positive note of the reported strengthened accountability in this area.
- 2. to ensure appropriate protection of human rights defenders operating in the country, recognising the legitimacy of their work, including full and impartial investigations and prosecutions into all alleged human rights violations committed against them.**
- 3. And last but not least, to consider signing and ratifying the new Optional Protocol to the CRC on a communications procedure.**

Thank you, Mr. President.