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Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the Office of the United Nations and
to the other International Organizations
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**United Nations Human Rights Council
16th Session of the UPR Working Group**

Geneva, 22 April 2013

**German questions and recommendations to
Turkmenistan**

Statement

by

H.E. Ambassador Hanns H. Schumacher

**Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations**

Mister President,

Germany welcomes the delegation of Turkmenistan to the second cycle of the UPR and thanks Turkmenistan for its national report.

Germany appreciates the improvements regarding the cooperation of Turkmenistan with treaty bodies and Special Procedures and notes with appreciation the adoption of the Mass Media Act.

Germany, however, remains concerned about the continuation of detentions, harassment and intimidation of journalists, media workers and human rights defenders. The blocking of Internet sites by government authorities is of equal concern.

We would appreciate more detailed information on how the government plans to promote the establishment of independent media based on the Media Act that entered into force in January 2013 - and protect the media once established.

Germany is also worried about the continued restrictive treatment of religious communities, including the legal requirement for these communities to ask for governmental approval to carry out their activities.

Germany therefore offers the following recommendations to the Government of Turkmenistan:

- 1. To ensure freedom of expression and access to information by ending the practice of interfering with access to the internet and the practice of censorship in online and print media.**
- 2. to end arbitrary detention, harassment and other acts of intimidation against journalists, media workers and human rights defenders.**

3. to fully implement the rights of convicts serving long-term imprisonment to communicate with their lawyers, their relatives and to have access to health care.

4. to inform relatives and the public about the whereabouts of all persons, who have been under arrest and whose fate is currently unknown.

I thank you Mister President.

Question in advance :

Germany would like to ask the Government of Turkmenistan what measures it foresees in order to ensure communication between detainees in prisons and their lawyers, therapeutic institutions and their relatives.

