

ENGLISH VERSION – CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



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**Human Rights Council
18th Session
Universal Periodic Review
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

Mr President,

Brazil welcomes the delegation of Macedonia to the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review.

We are pleased to learn that the country has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The ratification of the International Convention on Enforced Disappearance would be an additional important step towards universal adherence to human rights treaties.

As a follow-up to the recommendations presented by Brazil in the first cycle, we acknowledge the accreditation of the Ombudsman to the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. We stress the importance of advancing its independence and strengthening the institution, as well as of ensuring adequate funds and resources.

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As also recommended by Brazil in 2009, we are pleased to learn that the implementation of the Strategy the Action Plans for Roma, in line with the Decade of Roma Inclusion, is among the priorities at national level. We encourage the government to promote campaigns on preventing discrimination against Roma and to strengthen efforts to protect their rights and to guarantee their access to social services.

We note with satisfaction that, in 2012, Macedonia approved amendments to the Law on Asylum and Protection, in accordance with UNHCR recommendations. We suggest that the country improve the capacity and efficiency of the procedure for identifying, registering and providing documentation to all asylum-seekers;

We recognize progress on the protection of the rights of women with the adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as well as of the Strategy and the National Plan on Gender Equality. We recommend the country to prohibit all forms of discrimination and violence against women.

Intolerance against LGBT individuals was identified by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression as a matter of concern. We recommend that Macedonia conduct public awareness campaigns to promote tolerance and the principles of equality and non-discrimination, including on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thank you.