

UPR18

CZECH REPUBLIC

STATEMENT ON THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We note with appreciation the importance the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia attaches to human rights, as witnessed by its successful candidacy to the Human Rights Council. We look forward to cooperating with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in defending and promoting human rights worldwide.

The Czech Republic nevertheless notes with regret reports pointing towards deterioration of freedom of expression and the media in the country since the last UPR. Therefore, we would like to **recommend** that the ~~Macedonian~~ Government examine the allegations of intimidating independent media by state institutions and ensure that appointments of members of the Broadcasting Council are made with emphasis on impartiality and professionalism of the candidates.

We further **recommend** ensuring that the broadcasting of the public broadcaster is balanced and not favourable to any political party and that the Broadcasting Law is not applied selectively and abused for political purposes.

Finally, the Czech Republic **recommends** creating an enabling environment for independent operation of various media outlets, including guaranteeing their access to effective remedies in cases of alleged political pressure and interference.

I thank you.