



Permanent Mission  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the Office of the United Nations and  
to the other International Organizations  
Geneva

**United Nations Human Rights Council  
18th Session of the UPR Working Group**

**Geneva, 30 January 2014**

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**Review of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

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**German Statement**

Mr. President,

Germany welcomes the delegation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the UPR and commends the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for albeit modest progress achieved since the last review, in particular with regard to some improvements within the judicial system and public administration.

Germany remains, however, concerned about the following issues.

1. It has been observed that the working conditions of human rights organizations and activists in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have deteriorated. Human rights organizations and activists claim to be systematically subjected to pressure and discredited in the media. Germany is of the opinion that a removal of obstacles for the work of human rights defenders is urgently needed. Furthermore, Germany would like to learn, what steps the Macedonian Government intends to take, to ensure that recognized NGOs not be defamed by media and will be allowed better access to State authorities and relevant documents.
2. There have been a number of announcements of policies and programs of the Macedonian Government geared towards better inclusion of Roma and other disadvantaged minorities, such as the Disabled pertaining both to the fields of education and work. However, the implementation of these programs is hardly forthcoming. Germany calls upon the Macedonian Government to cooperate more closely with NGOs and international donors in this field and to put up medium-term programs backed up by appropriate funding to further the inclusion of Roma and other disadvantaged minorities, such as the Disabled.
3. We remain concerned about reports concerning the deterioration of freedom of expression and freedom of press and **recommend** to the Macedonian Government to continue to ensure the independence of the media and the press.
4. Lastly, we **recommend** to the Macedonian Government to take effective measures to bring conditions of detention in line with international standards, notably with regard to the overcrowding of prisons.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**Question submitted in advance by Germany:**

1. Although the relevant legislation to safeguard the independence of the judiciary is formally in place, relevant international observers such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe are of the opinion that there are indications of cases of governmental interference. In almost all cases with a political background, the right of the accused to an appeal are reported to be significantly impeded by often very late delivery of written reasons for verdicts which constitutes a violation of the statutory time limits.

Germany would like to know, if the Macedonian Government will allow an independent review of indictments and sentences in cases where an underlying political influence might be assumed in due time, i.g. by experts of the Council of Europe.

2. There has been reporting on about a number of cases of pre-trial detention and sentencing solely based on the testimony of a protected witness. Will the Macedonian Government allow an independent monitoring of such kind of cases?

