

Check against delivery

18th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group (27 January-7 February 2014)

**Statement by H. E. Mr. Rytis Paulauskas,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Lithuania
at the review of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
30 January 2014**

Mr. President,

Lithuania warmly welcomes the esteemed delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and thanks for the informative National Report. We welcome the inclusive process of preparation of the report that involved broad public discussion and active participation of different state and non-state actors.

We would like to commend Macedonia for the achieved progress in development of legislative and institutional framework for promotion and protection of human rights since the first UPR. In particular, we note with satisfaction the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

We note the recent adoption of the Law on Media and the Law on Audiovisual Media Services. In this regard, we recommend Macedonia to guarantee freedom of expression and media and to ensure that national legislation fully complies with international freedom of expression standards.

We commend the efforts by Macedonia to ensure gender equality, in particular by adopting the new Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the respective Strategy and National Action Plan. At the same time we note that discrimination against women in law and practice continues to be reported. In this regard, Lithuania recommends Macedonia continue to implement existing legislation related to gender equality in order to ensure that men and women are treated equally and stereotypes regarding women are eradicated.

I thank you.