

UPR Intervention for Macedonia, 18th Session, January 30, 2014

The United States warmly welcomes **head of delegation** and congratulates the Republic of Macedonia on the completion of its national report and presentation today.

We commend Macedonia for ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in January 2012. We also commend Macedonia for the improved conditions in Idrizovo (PRON: i-DRIZ-oh-vah) Prison.

However, we note challenges that remain in Macedonia with regard to human rights protections. We are concerned by reports of physical mistreatment of detainees and prisoners by police and prison guards, as well as by the poor conditions and overcrowding in some of the country's prisons and mental institutions.

We also remain concerned by the government's use of public resources for political party activities, interference in the judiciary and the media, selective prosecution of political opponents, police impunity, and credible reports of government corruption. Does the government plan to increase oversight of government officials to address corruption and police impunity?

We continue to be concerned that some of the worst forms of child labor are still taking place in Macedonia, particularly domestic and international trafficking and forced begging on the streets.

Bearing in mind these concerns, we recommend that Macedonia:

1. Develop a professional management approach within prisons as recommended by the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture;
2. Renew its respect for the rule of law by observing a strict separation between state and party activities and ensuring an independent judiciary and media;
3. Take the necessary measures to effectively eliminate the worst forms of child labor.