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UPR18/The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Statement by Slovakia

30 January 2014

Mr President,

Slovakia thanks the delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the presentation of the national report on the main human rights achievements since the first UPR cycle. We commend its commitment to strengthen the human rights protection at national level by way of becoming a State party to several international instruments on human rights during the period under review as well as submission of the mid-term report on progress in implementing recommendations.

We take positive note of the steps aimed at reform of the justice system. To consolidate the independence of judiciary, more determined action is, however, required by the Government. In addition, Slovakia encourages relevant national authorities to pursue thoroughly their efforts aimed at addressing the backlog of cases before domestic courts. In this connection, what additional measures does the Macedonian Government envisage to take with a view to accelerate judicial proceedings and to reduce the number of pending cases?

Despite some progress in the penitentiary system in terms of improving living conditions for detainees in pre-trial detention and prisoners serving their sentence, prison system remains under-funded and understaffed. Overcrowding, conditions for juveniles and the complaint system continue to raise human rights concerns.

We would like to offer recommendations to the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:

- 1. To strengthen efforts to consolidate the independence of judiciary and to speed up implementation of measures aimed at reducing the backlog of cases before domestic courts.**
- 2. To continue reforms of the penitentiary system with special focus on human rights training for penitentiary staff.**

Thank you.