



**Statement by Sweden in the
interactive dialogue on FYROM**

*Delivered by Minister Counsellor Irina Schoulgin Nyoni
Geneva, January 30, 2014*

Mr President,

Sweden wishes to thank H.E. Mr. Igor Djundev and his delegation for taking an active part in the UPR and for the information concerning the advance questions we raised.

As part of the country's EU integration, judicial reforms in line with international standards have largely been completed and Sweden commends these efforts. In recent time however, there has been an increase of claims of selective justice, notably in some high profile journalist cases. Numerous voices have raised concerns over arbitrary and lengthy pre-trial detentions. What measures will the government take to increase the public's trust in the judiciary system and to ensure clear and transparent procedures for pre-trial detentions?

Sweden recommends the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to, as a step towards strengthening the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, increase its efforts to strengthen the merit-based recruitment of judges, inter alia by effectively implementing the new Law on Courts requiring all newly appointed first-instance judges to have graduated from the Academy for Judges and Prosecutors' (AJP) 2-year training programme.

There have been reports of poor media freedom in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for a long time where a number of INGOs and CSOs have expressed concern. Lack of civil society consultation on the new draft media laws, public advertisement funding for political purposes and self-censorship are some of the issues raised. What measures does the government intend to take in order to improve the current media freedom situation in the country?

Enjoying wide public and political party consensus on media legislation is necessary for improving the conditions for media pluralism and for strengthening the media freedom in the country. Consequently, Sweden wishes to recommend the government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to engage

constructively in consultations with civil society, broadcasters and other relevant stakeholders in order to cease the current status quo and public discontent over the procedure and content of the new draft media laws.

Thank you, Mr. President