**Universal Periodical Review of the Republic of Bulgaria**

**7 May 2015**

**Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the Republic of Bulgaria.

We are glad to note that as a result of the extensive dialogue with representatives of civil society, the authorities have prepared a detailed national report which truly reflects the human rights situation in the country.

Estonia welcomes the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (**CRPD**) and Optional Protocol to CAT (**OP-CAT**).

We note with appreciation the continuous efforts of the authorities to combat against manifestations of racism and intolerance in the media and to promote tolerance, understanding and intercultural dialogue among the population.

We encourage Bulgarian authorities to intensify their efforts in reforming the judiciary system and fighting against corruption, organised crime and conflict of interests, according to the newly adopted Integrated Strategy for Prevention and Countering of Corruption.

Estonia commends the adoption of the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence and the continuing work towards guaranteeing gender equality and women’s rights, including sexual and reproductive health rights. We would like to urge Bulgaria, *inter alia,* to specifically criminalize domestic violence and marital rape and to introduce the possibility of *ex officio* prosecution for both offences. We invite Bulgarian authorities to ensure that all acts of sexual violence against women and girls are effectively investigated, perpetrators prosecuted and that their sentences correspond to the gravity of their crimes.

Estonia would like **to recommend** to the Government of Bulgaria:

* to take steps to ratify the **Kampala amendments** to the Rome Statute of the **ICC**
* to ensure freedom of expression and media freedom by guaranteeing that journalists and media workers are able to practice their professions in a free and safe environment and to investigate all attacks on journalists and media workers

We would like to wish the delegation of Bulgaria a successful review meeting.

Thank you!