



**22nd Session of the Working Group for UPR
Interactive Dialogue on Report of Croatia**

Statement of Ambassador Vladislav Mladenovic
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Serbia
to the United Nations Office in Geneva

We welcome the distinguished delegation of Croatia and we thank them for their Report.

We acknowledge Government measures undertaken for protecting the rights of members of national minorities and encourage Croatia to make further efforts in this regard. Unfortunately, ethnic discrimination still persists and the Serbian minority, including returnees and refugees, continue to face severe problems with respect to equal treatment, use of language and script as well as housing, pension and property rights, etc. Special attention should be paid to the frequent incidence of hate speech in the public discourse.

The Human Rights Committee in March this year repeated its recommendation to expedite efforts for resettlement and return of refugees, returnees and IDPs, which is yet another indicator that further concrete efforts are needed in this regard. Accountability for human rights violations in the past, particularly for crimes committed in 1995, during and after Operation Storm, should be ensured, while investigations of all unresolved cases of enforced disappearances need to be conducted in unbiased and transparent manner.

We recommend Croatia the following:

- Provide full respect of minority rights guaranteed by positive legislation, including the right to use minority language and script, specifically Cyrillic script;
- Promote inter-ethnic tolerance through adequate measures, including awareness raising campaigns in media in close cooperation with civil society and minority associations;
- Ensure accountability for all manifestations of ethnic based hate speech, racism and extremist rhetoric in the public sphere;
- Prosecute all cases of past human rights violations, war crimes and crimes against humanity in a non-discriminatory and independent manner, in consistence with the requirements under the ICCPR;
- Proceed to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances.