**UPR – Republic of Moldova – 4 November 2016**

**STATEMENT by BULGARIA**

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Bulgaria warmly welcomes the distinguished delegation of the Republic of Moldova, led by…

We would like to thank for the comprehensive national report and the detailed presentation, demonstrating strong commitment to the UPR process.

Bulgaria appreciates the conditions created so far for the functioning of the dozens of schools where the Bulgarian language is taught, in conformity with the International instruments concerning Social, Cultural and Educational Rights. We support the Special Rapporteur on minority issues call (2016) to the Government to further promote linguistic rights of minorities and strengthen the unity between various population groups in the country.

Bulgaria commends Moldova for the efforts in combating discrimination by establishing the Council on the prevention and elimination of discrimination and ensuring equality, as well the recent (2016) approval of the draft Law on incriminating the bias based offences.

It is worth to commend one of the most recent and important developments in the legislation of Moldova – The new Strategy on gender equality, for the period of 2016–2020*.*

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations:

1. To further develop the policy in the field of preservation and development of cultural identity of persons belonging to national minorities and ethnic groups;
2. To create mechanisms for preventing and fighting against all forms of exploitation, abuse and violence against children; and
3. To ensure strengtheningthe freedom of expression online and offline, as well as personal data protection.

Thank you!