**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE AT THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC AT THE 26TH UPR WORKING GROUP, 31 OCTOBER 2016**

Mr President,

Singapore welcomes the engagement of the Syrian Arab Republic with the UPR working group.

Singapore, like other members of the international community, is deeply concerned over the humanitarian crisis in Syria. The Syrian people have endured much suffering and losses in the last five and a half years.

We strongly support the call for all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities and facilitate humanitarian access for those affected by the conflict.

We call on the Syrian Government to continue caring for its citizens, and to do its utmost to alleviate the impact of the conflict and uphold the human rights of Syrians, particularly women, children and the elderly.

We **recommend** that Syria implement and strengthen measures to protect the rights of the child, including preventing and combating the recruitment of child soldiers and trafficking in children.

We **recommend** that Syria take effective steps to address the educational needs of all children even in these difficult conditions.

We **recommend** that Syria take concrete steps to stop sexual violence against women and girls, and ensure that victims are given protection and assistance with their recovery.

Mr President,

The key actors in this conflict have acknowledged that the only way to end this conflict is to reach a political solution.

We hope they can achieve this as soon as possible while ensuring the safety of civilians and that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need.

Thank you Mr President.