27th session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group, 1-12 May 2017

Statement by the Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania

of the Permanent Mission of Lithuania,

at the review of Philippines national report

Mr. President,

Lithuania welcomes the esteemed delegation of Philippines at the 27th session of Universal Periodic Review and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Lithuania observes positive steps taken by the Government of Philippines in strengthening human rights standards and implementing international commitments, namely, in the area of transparency, freedom of religion. Nevertheless, Lithuania is worried that other issues remain un-addressed or lack progress. For example, we remain concerned about uncontrollable situation regarding extrajudicial killings when more than 8 thousand people were killed (in less than a year). We also express our concern that the Government of Philippines pledged their intentions to reinstate the death penalty. Children exploitation and lack of measures to ensure dignified treatment and living standards for them is also a topic of concern for us. Furthermore, we would like to draw the attention to the fact that working environment for journalists is not properly guaranteed. International organizations are reporting that journalists are being killed because of their work. In order to seek further improvement of the human rights’ situation it is essential to fully implement recommendations of UPR and engage in a dialogue with civil society. From our part, we would like to present several recommendations:

* To begin with, Lithuania recommends the Government of Philippines to take concrete measures to stop the extrajudicial killings. Additionally, UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings should be invited to visit the country, without any conditionality.
* Second recommendation - to continue implementation the provisions of ICCPR Second optional protocol regarding the abolition of death penalty and reconsider plans to restore death penalty as a legal punishment.
* Lastly, Lithuania recommends the Government of Philippines to create safer working environment for the journalists.

I thank you, Mr. President