**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

44th session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

***Review of Turkmenistan***

6 November 2023

Mr. President,

Bulgaria welcomes the Delegation of Turkmenistan and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Bulgaria acknowledges the positive developments in Turkmenistan’s regulatory, institutional and policy framework on protection of human rights in line with the accepted recommendations during the third UPR cycle.

We highlight the improvement of the labour legislation with a view to guaranteeing the rights and legitimate interests of workers. Bulgaria recognizes the efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Office of Ombudsperson in close cooperation with the United Nations agencies, the OSCE and other international organizations. We note with appreciation that the Policy Framework for Inclusive Education in Turkmenistan, 2023-2028, including an Action Plan, was drawn up with the support of UNICEF.

Bulgaria would like to encourage Turkmenistan to take appropriate measures to ensure freedom of expression, both online and offline, the independence of media and the safety of journalists.

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations to Turkmenistan:

1. Develop and implement nationwide awareness-raising programs to promote better understanding of the importance of achieving equality between women and men, the realization of women’s and girls’ human rights and their empowerment;
2. Take further efforts to develop a system for the provision of comprehensive services for children with disabilities and their families, with an emphasis on early identification, prompt intervention, social support and rehabilitation.

We wish the Delegation of Turkmenistan a successful outcome of the review!

Thank you, Mr. President!