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*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

**WG UPR 44 – Uzbekistan**

***Intervention of Belgium***

8 November 2023

President,

Belgium welcomes the delegation of Uzbekistan and wishes it every success in the exercise of its fourth UPR. While acknowledging progress made in some areas since its previous UPR, we are convinced that further progress can be achieved to increase the protection of human rights in line with the core international human rights treaties.

Therefore, we would like to formulate the following recommendations:

**R1.** Take appropriate legal and policy measures to combat the prevalence of gender-based violence, including domestic and sexual violence, and ensure that all such cases are effectively investigated, perpetrators are prosecuted and appropriate sanctions are imposed.

**R2.** Ensure that journalists, writers and bloggers can work freely without fear of retribution for expressing critical opinions or covering subjects deemed sensitive.

**R3.** Halt intimidation and violence towards LGBTQI+ people and ensure equal opportunity, including by eliminating discriminatory laws and policies.

Thank you, President.