**44th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Uzbekistan – 8 November 2023**

Statement by Mr. Bernard Charles Mifsud, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the UN in Geneva

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Mr. President,

Malta welcomes the delegation of Uzbekistan to this UPR session and thanks them for the national report. Since the third cycle, Uzbekistan has taken a number of steps to improve its implementation of human rights standards, including through the National Human Rights Strategy adopted in June 2020, on issues such as women’s equality and tackling torture and ill-treatment in detention. The ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in 2021 and the criminalisation of gender-based violence are significant achievements. We encourage Uzbekistan to continue with these and other national reforms to strengthen human rights application.

Malta makes the following recommendations:

1. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD);
2. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
3. Investigate all reports of ill-treatment against persons deprived of liberty, including allegations of rape and sexual violence, and bring perpetrators to justice.
4. Consider including provisions criminalizing all forms of domestic violence including psychological violence, economic and sexual violence in the final draft of the proposed new Criminal Code, currently under review.

We wish Uzbekistan a successful UPR session.

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