**38th SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

**REVIEW OF NIGER**

**3 May 2021**

**Statement by the Republic of Croatia**

Madam President,

Croatia welcomes the delegation of Niger and thanks them for their report.

We commend the adoption of the new National Gender Policy in 2017 and its action plan, along with the introduction of the women’s quota system for elected and appointed positions.

Nevertheless, we are extremely worried by the ongoing practice of *wahaya* despite the criminalization of slavery in 2003*.*

Finally, we underscore the need for promotion of religious tolerance through interfaith dialogue and protection of the freedom of religion or belief.

We have three recommendations:

1. Specifically criminalize the practice of *wahaya*, with the same penalties as other forms of slavery.
2. Accelerate accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and revise the Penal Code to abolish the death penalty.
3. Adopt all necessary measures to protect Christians and other religious minorities from all forms of violence and discrimination.

Croatia wishes Niger a successful review session.

Thank you.