**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

42nd session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

***Review of Pakistan***

30 January 2023

Mr. President,

Bulgaria welcomes the high level Delegation of Pakistan and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Bulgaria highlights the promulgation by the Government of Pakistan of the landmark Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act, 2021, which provides legal protection to journalists and media professionals and creates an enabling environment for their work.

We recognize that in recent years the Ministry of Human Rights has affirmed its role as a leading national institution for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Bulgaria appreciates that Pakistan continuously enhances and implements programs and public policies for development, poverty reduction, equality, non-discrimination, and social inclusion in line with its National Agenda 2030.

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations to Pakistan:

 1) Continue efforts to strengthen the capacity of the human rights institutions at the federal and provincial levels, including the National Commission on Human Rights, National Commission on Status of Women, National Commission on Child Rights and National Commission on Minorities;

 2) Take further steps in the field of women's empowerment by ensuring access to education, professional realization in the labor market and fair participation in political and social life;

 3) Continue to adopt and implement programs and initiatives to strengthen the protection of the rights of the child, including guaranteeing equal rights to quality education for girls and boys, regardless of their social status and ethnicity, and improving access to all educational stages.

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

Thank you, Mr. President.