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**UPR43 – MONTENEGRO**

**Statement by Slovakia**

8 May 2023

Mr President,

Slovakia thanks the delegation of Montenegro for the presentation of its national report.

We welcome all the significant activities and efforts which Montenegro´s Government undertook to strengthen the normative and institutional framework in order to protect and promote the human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this regard, Slovakia appreciates that during the reporting period the Montenegro ratified Protocol No. 16 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

To secure the principles based on democracy and the rule of law, media freedom, freedom of expression and pluralism should henceforward remain in the centre of our common interest. Along that line, we encourage Montenegro to continue with adoptions of measures aimed at securing the safety of journalists.

Slovakia offers following recommendations to Montenegro for further consideration:

1/ ensure the protection of journalists and freedom of speech and reinforce all institutional mechanisms involved in processing all cases of attacks on journalists,

2/ protect the civil and secular character of the State, as well as the multicultural and multiconfessional aspects of the civil society.

I thank you, President.