**Universal Periodic Review of UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**22 January 2018
Intervention by the delegation of Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of the United Arab Emirates to its 3rd UPR, and thanks for the presentation of the report.

Estonia welcomes the UAE’s generous contribution to development assistance and its support to UN Women. We would like to encourage the government of the UAE, including in the light of the UAE membership in the Human Rights Council, to further enhance its cooperation with all of the UN human rights mechanisms, including by accepting requests for visits by special procedures.

Estonia invites the UAE government to take further steps to ensure the respect of the right to freedom of opinion and expression online and offline, including ending the harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders, also on the internet. We **recommend** the UAE to decriminalize defamation and include it as part of the civil code in accordance with international standards.

While we positively note the adoption of the National Strategy for the Empowerment and Advancement of Emirati Women (2015–2021), Estonia remains concerned about the inequality of and discrimination against women in the country in law and in practice. We **recommend** the government to work towards enhancing gender equality in the society, including removing impediments to women’s free movement and free choice of profession and employment. We further **recommend** the UAE to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in the home and in school.

We wish to the delegation of the United Arab Emirates a successful review meeting.

Thank you.