

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Observer of the Holy See

to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

at Human Rights Council – 30th Session of the Universal Periodical Review

**Colombia**

*Geneva, 10 May 2018*

Mr. President,

The Holy See welcomes the Delegation of Colombia during the presentation of its National Report for the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review, the first after the signing of the Peace Agreement, which demonstrates the importance of putting at “the centre of all political, social and economic activity the human person, who enjoys the highest dignity”[[1]](#footnote-1).

In this sense, it is essential to strive for the reintegration of former combatants, especially children, and to offer true justice and reparation to all victims, including displaced women and men and those who have fled abroad.

My Delegation would like to offer the following recommendations:

* To improve access to, and the quality of, education for children, especially for those living in rural areas and those belonging to minorities;
* To continue to implement measures to counter trafficking in persons and other modern forms of slavery;
* To ensure the restitution and reparation due to victims of violence, especially women;
* To provide access to basic healthcare, especially in the rural areas, so as to reduce maternal and infant mortality;
* To ensure that indigenous and rural communities can express their free and informed consent prior to any measure that may affect their lives and their ancestral land.

The Holy See expresses to the Delegation of Colombia its best wishes for a suc**c**essful UPR.

Thank you, Mr. President.

1. Pope Francis, *Meeting with authorities, the diplomatic corps and representatives of civil society*, Bogotà, 7 September 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)