

STATEMENT by Senior Adviser Ellen Stie

**30th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

 **9 May 2018**

*Check against delivery*

President,

Norway welcomes Uzbekistan’s participation in the UPR and notes the positive steps taken since its last review, including greater openness and international engagement. The release of political prisoners and [removal of persons from black lists;] the increasing freedom of the press [and the progress made on abolishing forced labour in the cotton harvest are all positive first steps.]

Norway remains concerned about restrictions on civil society and freedom of expression, association and belief.

Norway recommends that Uzbekistan:

1) Adopt concrete measures to ensure the legitimate exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and belief;

2) Carry out judicial and penitentiary reform in accordance with international law;

3) Invite the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on torture and human rights defenders.

Thank you.