**30th SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

**REVIEW OF Azerbaijan**

**Statement of Croatia**

Mr. President,

Croatia would like to extend a warm welcome to the delegation of Azerbaijan and thank them for the presentation of their report.

We commend Azerbaijan’s ratifications of international human rights treaties since the second review cycle and for fulfilling their reporting obligations to the UN treaty bodies in a timely manner.

We welcome the approval of the State Programme for the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities 2018–2024, with the aim of providing equal access to all levels of education and creating a user-friendly environment for persons with disabilities.

We note that the Constitution of Azerbaijan was amended to provide a more robust system of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; nonetheless, we remain concerned that both journalists and human rights defenders critical of the Government have been either threatened or sanctioned by the authorities.

Therefore, allow us to address Azerbaijan with two recommendations:

1. **To remove legislative and practical obstacles for the functioning of civil society;**
2. **To ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (2014).**

Croatia would like to compliment the Government of Azerbaijan for the progress achieved and wish them a successful review session.

Thank you.