**Statement by the State of Palestine at the Universal Periodic Review of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,24th of January 2019**

Thank you, Mr. President,

The State of Palestine welcomes the delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and thank them for the comprehensive presentation of their national report.

We commend the efforts by the Government to promote and protect human rights in the country since the last cycle of the UPR despite the crisis that they were facing.

We acknowledge the efforts of the Government to build an independent, impartial, professional and efficient justice system including through the adoption of the new Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017 to 2022, in this regard **we recommend that the government guarantees and protects the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary and to ensure the right to a fair trial without undue delay.**

We also welcome the various initiatives by the government to combat discrimination including the National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination on Grounds of Ethnic Affiliation and the National Equality and Non-Discrimination Strategy, 2013-2020. **We recommend that the government intensifies its efforts to eradicate structural discrimination against Roma people, to improve their socioeconomic status and to increase their participation in public life and decision-making processes.**

We wish the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia a successful review.

I thank you