**32nd session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of Afghanistan**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Olaph J. Terribile,**

**Permanent Representative**

Thank you, Mr Vice President,

Malta welcomes the delegation of Afghanistan and thanks it for the presentation of its national report.

We particularly welcome the law on religious minorities that the government has drafted to protect minority rights and freedoms, the positive steps it undertook to address discrimination against women, and its ratification of international human rights instruments, especially the Optional Protocol to the Convention of Torture in 2018.

In this context, Malta would like to make the following recommendations to the Government of Afghanistan:

1. Continue efforts to ensure that all religious communities are free to practice their religion or belief and that this right is adequately protected;
2. Strengthen efforts aimed at eliminating discrimination and violence against women;
3. Take further steps to ensure a framework policy for the protection of the rights of the child in line with international standards.

We wish the delegation of Afghanistan a successful review.

I thank you.