**Universal Periodic Review of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

**21 January 2019**

**Intervention by Estonia**

Estonia warmly welcomes the delegation of Afghanistan to its third UPR session.

Estonia notes positively the progress made since the last UPR, including introduction of a new Penal code with several progressive provisions in line with the international standards.

We also welcome the launch of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP 1325) and ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OP-CAT) as recommended among others by Estonia.

We recognize that some positive steps have been taken concerning the rights of the child and empowerment of women, we would like to note however, that further progress is needed to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights by women as well as to prevent the violations of the rights of the child.

Estonia would like to make the following recommendations:

- Accelerate progress regarding tackling gender-based violence, including domestic violence against women and girls.

- Take steps to ensure a safe working environment for human rights defenders.

- Ensure freedom of expression, offline as well as online, and improve the work concerning prevention and investigation of the attacks against journalists, media workers and media offices.

-Ensure quality education for all children, including improving access to education for girls in all regions of the country.

- Ratify both optional protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

- Accede to Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute.

We wish you a successful review.

Thank you!