**32nd SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

**REVIEW OF VIETNAM**

**22 January 2019**

**Statement of Croatia**

Thank you Mr. President,

Croatia welcomes the delegation of Viet Nam and thanks them for the presentation of their third national report.

We would like to commend the commitment of the government to the UPR process and the serious approach it has taken in the preparation of the report.

Croatia welcomes also the ratification of the UN Conventions against Torture and on Persons with Disabilities. The improvements and the efforts in the area of rights of persons with disabilities, including the National Committee and various projects launched, are an important step towards ensuring and protecting the human rights of all its citizens.

There are, however, areas of concern. Viet Nam should do more to foster a safe and enabling environment for civil society including by removing legal measures that limit the right to association. The Law on Belief and Religion adopted in 2016 does not seem to enable the freedom of religion or belief for all and, although there are some improvements regarding the reducing of the number of offences subject to the death penalty there is still no moratorium.

Allow us therefore Mr President, to address Viet Nam with two recommendations:

1. Reviewthe 2016 Law on Belief and Religion and bring it in conformity with international human rights standards and FoRB standards

2. Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to ICCPR aiming at the abolition of the death penalty

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

Thank you.