**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

32nd session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

***Review of Afghanistan***

21 January 2019

Mr. Vice-President,

Bulgaria welcomes the high level Delegation of Afghanistan and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Bulgaria values the strong commitment of the National Unity Government of Afghanistan to address insecurity, reduce poverty, and improve governance, rule of law and human rights.

We acknowledge that the Afghan Government has made further progress in enhancing the normative and institutional framework on protection of human rights after the Second UPR cycle.

Bulgaria would like to highlight the Afghan authorities’ work to protect the rights of women and empower them. We would like to encourage Afghanistan to take more tangible measures to eliminate violence against women and girls and to improve their access to education and work.

Bulgaria notes with appreciation the increased engagement of Afghanistan in combatting trafficking in human beings.

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Take further steps to promote women’s full and meaningful participation in activities, related to peace negotiations, peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the country;
2. Establish a system to identify and assess the educational needs of children with disabilities and build institutionalized capacity to assist and provide them inclusive education.

We wish the Delegation of Afghanistan a successful review!

Thank you, Mr. Vice-President!