**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

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

***Review of Eritrea***

28 January 2019

Thank you, Mr. President,

Bulgaria welcomes the Delegation of Eritrea and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Bulgaria would like to highlight the positive developments in Eritrea’s relations with neighboring Ethiopia, Somalia and Djibouti in 2018. We hope that these significant changes in the Horn of Africa will facilitate the course of reforms and will have favorable effect on the socio-economic and human rights situation in the country.

We encourage the authorities of Eritrea to take appropriate steps for effective implementation of the 1997 Constitution of the country. Bulgaria notes that despite lack of funding, resources and difficult economic conditions, the Government of Eritrea has worked to ensure food security, health care, social services and reduction of disparities between rural and urban areas. We recognize the high priority attached by the Government for promotion of free 8 year basic education and express the view that prompt measures to improve qualification and raise motivation of the teaching corps will be particularly helpful for its achievement.

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Continue the course of political and socio-economic reforms with a view to expedite improvement of the standard of living and wellbeing of all citizens.
2. Adopt a comprehensive policy and legislation criminalizing violence against women and girls, especially violence against women in the armed forces.

We wish the Delegation of Eritrea a successful review!

Thank you, Mr. President!