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**UPR32 – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

**Statement by Slovakia**

24 January 2019

Mr. President,

Slovakia welcomes the delegation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to this UPR session and thanks it for the presentation of its national report.

Slovakia welcomes a progressive approach of the current Government towards building the rule of law. We note with satisfaction the inclusion of the other stakeholders, including opposition, in the process.

We welcome the adoption the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence, in 2014.

We note that a situation of vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities or persons belonging to ethnic minority, in the country’s society remains a challenge in terms of effective implementation of human rights standards. It needs to be addressed further.

We appreciate positive steps taken to address hate crime and hate speech as well as gender based discrimination. Nevertheless, we encourage the FYROM to continue this fight with further legal reforms.

We also call on the FYROM's authorities to provide necessary support and resources to relevant human rights institutions in order to reinforce their capacities to fight against violations and abuses of the human rights, including through strengthening their preventive role.

In this regard, Slovakia wishes to recommend to the FYROM the following:

1. Adopt legislation on protection and prevention against discrimination and to ensure its effective implementation and harmonization with other relevant laws,
2. Amend the Law on the Ombudsman in order to be fully in line with the Paris Principles and provide the Office of the Ombudsman with necessary human and financial resources to ensure effective and independent implementation of its mandate.
3. Ratify the Optional Protocol to the CRC on a communications procedure.

We wish the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia a successful review.

I thank you, Mr. President.