**Third Universal Periodic Review of the Republic of Albania**

**Statement of the Republic of Poland**

**33rd session of the Human Rights Council Working Group on the UPR**

**Geneva, 6 May 2019, 14:30 hrs**

*Mr. President,*

Poland would like to thank the delegation of the Republic of Albania for its active participation in the third cycle of the UPR process, as well as for a comprehensive presentation of its national report.

We noted progress achieved by Albania in a wide range of human rights areas since the last review in 2014 and its efforts undertaken to strengthen a legal and institutional human rights framework. In particular, we commend the release of the National Strategy on the Fight against Human Trafficking 2018-2020, which provides for additional safeguards for the protection and comprehensive support for victims of trafficking, as recommended by Poland in 2014.

At the same time, no State or government is without challenges when it comes to the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Therefore, Poland would like to recommend the following:

* **In light of the recent report of the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief on his mission to Albania – to guarantee that all government’s policies respect the principles of religious pluralism, universality, and inclusion of all communities and groups on an equal footing,** **especially with respect to the legal differentiation established in Albania between five legally recognized religious communities and other religious organizations;**
* **To enhance the protection of the human rights of detainees, by ensuring they have access to decent living conditions, medical care and are not physically mistreated. In this regard,** **implement a thorough penitentiary reform foreseen in the national report,** **investigate all allegations of torture or ill-treatment, prosecute those responsible and regularly instruct law enforcement officials that any acts of abuse towards arrested individuals are unacceptable and will be punished.**

*Thank you for your attention.*