**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

33rd session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

***Review of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea***

9 May 2019

Mr. President,

Bulgaria welcomes the Delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

Bulgaria notes the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the DPRK, the establishment of the Committee for the Implementation of the International Human Rights Treaties and the creation of the National Committee for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the country in recent years. We recognize the visit of UN Special rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities in the DPRK in May 2017 and the review of the state’s national reports before the Committee on the Rights of the Child and ~~in~~ the CEDAW Committee in 2017. Bulgaria notes the reunions of 89 separated North and South Korean families, which were held at North Korea’s Mount Kumgang tourist resort in August 2018, for the first time since 2015.

Nevertheless, Bulgaria regrets that the overall human rights situation in the DPRK has not substantially improved since the second UPR. We acknowledge that the findings of the 2014 Commission of Inquiry on Human Rig+hts in the DPRK remain still relevant. We call for complete termination of the practices of forceful re-education through labour.

Our understanding is that within the context of the continuing negotiations on peace, security and denuclearization with the DPRK authorities, the readiness of the North Korean Government to fully cooperate with all human rights mechanisms, including with the treaty Bodies and the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, would be highly desirable.

Bulgaria would like to make the following recommendations to the DPRK:

1) Ensure human and financial resources and authonomy for the Committee for the Implementation of the International Human Rights Treaties to enable it to effectively promote human rights in the country;

2) Develop and adopt a comprehensive plan of action to promote women’s rights and their empowerment, and monitor and assess its implementation;

3) Consider seeking technical cooperation and capacity-building support from UNICEF and other international bodies in the process of the implementation of 2010 Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child;

4) Take appropriate measures to develop inclusive education for children with disabilities and ensure that it is prioritized over their placement in specialized institutions and classes.

We wish the Delegation of the DPRK a successful review!

Thank you, Mr. President!