**35th session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of Armenia**

**23 January 2020**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Christopher Grima,**

**Permanent Representative**

Thank you, Madam President.

Malta welcomes the delegation of Armenia and thanks it for the presentation of its national report. We have taken good note of the progress that the Government of Armenia has achieved since its last review and welcome its signature and ratification of international human rights instruments. We also take positive note of other steps taken to ensure the rights of persons belonging to special groups and non-discrimination.

In light of the latter, we would like to make the following recommendations to the Government of Armenia:

1. Take concrete steps to eliminate discrimination against LGBTI persons;
2. Ensure prompt, thorough, and effective investigations into all cases of violence against LGBTI persons;
3. Amend the criminal code to include homophobia and transphobia as an aggravating criminal circumstance;
4. Explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected grounds in the draft Law on Equality.

We wish the delegation of Armenia a successful review session.

Thank you.