

*Représentation permanente de la Belgique auprès des Nations Unies et auprès des institutions spécialisées à Genève*

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| **WG UPR – Armenia**  ***Belgian intervention***  23th January 2020 |

Madam President,

Belgium is encouraged by Armenia’s efforts and progress regarding freedom of expression, including freedom of the press. We remain however concerned about the issue of violence against women, despite previous accepted recommendations.

Therefore, Belgium recommends the government of Armenia to:

**R1**. Adapt the Criminal Code to ensure effective follow-up of domestic violence incidents and raise awareness among the public on how to file complaints.

**R2**. Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

To ensure a enabling environment for human rights defenders, we further recommend to:

**R3**. Carry out an independent, prompt, effective and impartial investigation into attacks on human rights defenders to avoid a potential feeling of impunity among perpetrators of such attacks.

Thank you, Madam President