**Permanent Mission of Montenegro to the United Nations and other International Organizations**

**Statement by Montenegro**

**3rd UPR cycle – Review of Bulgaria**

**Geneva, 6 November 2020**

Montenegro appreciates Bulgaria's commitment to continue to work consistently to protect and promote human rights to the benefit of all persons residing in its territory. We recognize a wide range of actions at the level of policies and programs, carried out with the aim of encouraging the integration of Roma into society. Efforts to ensure an efficient implementation of the country’s anti-discrimination policies are also commendable.

While we welcome the legislative amendments to the Criminal Code governing the protection of the rights of victims of violence, we encourage Bulgaria to explicitly criminalize all forms of violence, and to amend the Criminal Code to include domestic violence as a specific crime. Montenegro also encourages Bulgaria to complete the ratification process of the Istanbul Convention as to strengthen the State’s ability to combat gender-based and domestic violence.

Montenegro recommends to Bulgaria:

1. To continue improving the accessibility of services for women and girls with disabilities exposed to gender-based violence.
2. To pursue with efforts to address prejudice, intolerance and discrimination against the Roma population and to ensure its greater inclusion into society.

I thank you.