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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

North Macedonia

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its thirty-second session from 21 January to 1 February 2019. The review of North Macedonia was held at the 8th meeting, on 24 January 2019. The delegation of North Macedonia was headed by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Andrej Zhernovski. At its 14th meeting, held on 29 January 2019, the Working Group adopted the report on North Macedonia.
2. On 15 January 2019, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of North Macedonia: China, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Hungary.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of North Macedonia:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/32/MKD/1);
 - (b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in accordance with paragraph 15 (b) (A/HRC/WG.6/32/MKD/2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/32/MKD/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Belarus, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, on behalf of the Group of Friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to North Macedonia through the troika. These questions are available on the website of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. The head of delegation of North Macedonia emphasized that the State strongly believed the peer review of human rights situations in all States Members of the United Nations could make a substantial contribution to the goal of the equal and full realization of human rights universally.
6. In the period following the second review cycle, North Macedonia had gone through a lengthy political and institutional crisis and had faced serious challenges in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. With a view to overcoming the crisis and to accelerating reforms, the Government formed on 1 June 2017 had adopted a reform package that had identified urgent priority areas for action and set out reform activities in the areas of the justice system, public administration and the security and intelligence services and also for improving the media landscape.
7. The procedure for the adoption of amendments to the Law on Courts and the Law on the Judicial Council were under way. Laws on criminal procedure, on the council of public prosecutors and on the Public Prosecutor's Office were in the final stage of drafting.
8. The parliament had adopted a new Law on the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interests, which contained stricter terms and an inclusive and transparent procedure for the selection and appointment of the President of the commission and its members. In the new Law, the competences of the commission had been increased and the tools for inspecting the assets of elected and appointed individuals and scrutinizing the legality of the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns had been strengthened.

9. The creation of an environment conducive to media freedom had been one of the main goals of the current Government. Of the 12 cases relating to physical and verbal threats against journalists recorded by the Ministry of the Interior in 2018, criminal charges had been instituted against the perpetrators in 7 cases, while investigations were still ongoing in 5 cases.
10. One of the strategic priorities of the Government had been the full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. A set of guarantees for full protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all communities in the country had been established.
11. A working group to plan, coordinate and monitor the Strategy for the Roma had been established, composed of members from competent institutions and civil society organizations representing the interests of the Roma community. Following a public call for the registration of persons not entered in the birth register, 670 persons had been identified. A draft law on a special administrative procedure had been prepared, with a view to enabling unregistered persons to enjoy their fundamental human rights.
12. In that connection, it was worth noting that the number of scholarships for Roma secondary education students had continued to increase.
13. Regarding the protection of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, the new law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination, which was currently before the parliament, introduced sexual orientation and gender identity as grounds of discrimination.
14. The promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was also among the priorities of the Government. The Convention had recently been translated into Macedonian sign language for persons with a hearing impairment.
15. The National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 focused on establishing an effective system for achieving gender equality through functional support mechanisms at the national and local levels, the harmonization of indicators for measuring progress on gender equality and the provision of gender-disaggregated statistics.
16. The National Action Plan foresaw measures to integrate gender-responsive budgeting in policy and programme development; to sensitize the public to the various forms of violence against women; to strengthen institutional capacities for taking action to protect victims; to enhance gender equality in priority thematic areas, such as health care, education and employment; to build a culture of equal opportunity; and to promote equal treatment and non-discrimination on grounds of gender.
17. To address domestic violence, in December 2018, as part of the activities under the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), preparation of a new law on gender-based violence had begun.
18. In addition, steps had been taken to combat human trafficking and to improve the health sector, in particular with regard to advancing sexual and reproductive rights.
19. Broad consultations had been held in the preparation of a draft bill on the national census, which had been submitted for public debate. The draft had received no negative comments.
20. With regard to the machinery to follow up on the recommendations of international human rights bodies, the Interministerial Human Rights Body acted as the national mechanism for reporting and follow-up and was tasked with coordinating the national human rights policy response to the recommendations of the universal periodic review, the United Nations treaty bodies and the special procedure mandate holders.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

21. During the interactive dialogue, 57 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue are to be found in section II of the present report.
22. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela appreciated efforts to adopt a new legal framework in the fight against discrimination. It took note of initiatives to address the overcrowding of prisons and appreciated the adoption of the first Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence.
23. Albania commended efforts to implement the recommendations made during the second review cycle. It noted with appreciation the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It praised the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and welcomed plans for its implementation. Albania welcomed steps taken by the authorities regarding the Law on the Use of Languages and looked forward to its implementation.
24. Algeria praised efforts to implement a number of initiatives, including the National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination 2016–2020 and the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination 2015–2020.
25. Argentina commended the Government for its initiatives aimed at fighting discrimination against women, in particular the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 and the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration 2017–2020.
26. Armenia commended the adoption of the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022, as well as a number of other strategies and national plans adopted or already being implemented. It welcomed the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the national action plan for its implementation. It also welcomed the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 and measures to attain gender equality through functional support mechanisms at the national and local levels.
27. Australia noted comparatively lower indicators for health performance, education outcomes and employment for Roma people and remained concerned by poor prison conditions, allegations of mistreatment of prisoners by prison officers and deaths of prisoners in custody. It noted that people with physical, intellectual and combined disabilities faced barriers to access to health, education and employment services.
28. While acknowledging a decrease in the pressure on journalists, Austria called for efforts to address all abuses and threats against journalists and improvements in legal, financial and policy frameworks with regard to civil society organizations. Austria noted that, despite support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights, the new law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination had yet to be adopted. It also raised concerns with regard to the rights of persons belonging to the Roma population, especially with regard to their housing, access to justice, health care and segregation in primary education.
29. Belarus welcomed the adoption of national strategies, including to protect Roma women, combat poverty, develop education and ensure equality and non-discrimination. It remained concerned about inequalities in access to education for all children, the unsatisfactory conditions and overcrowding in detention centres and barriers to the exercise of electoral rights.
30. Belgium commended the Government for its progress since its previous review, particularly the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence. It remained concerned, however, about challenges in the areas of freedom of the press and the fight against discrimination against women, the Roma community and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.
31. Benin welcomed the implementation of reforms to improve the normative and institutional framework protecting and promoting human rights, including the Plan 3-6-9 reform programme and the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022.

32. Bhutan noted that the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System had led to the adoption of important laws for strengthening the judiciary. It praised the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

33. Bulgaria noted the efforts of the Government to further harmonize the national legislative and institutional framework with international human rights instruments and to closely cooperate with the treaty bodies established under the United Nations and the Council of Europe conventions on human rights and fundamental freedoms. It encouraged North Macedonia to remain focused on reform of the judicial system, the creation of a safer environment for journalists and human rights defenders, the protection of children's rights and the fight against human trafficking.

34. Canada welcomed positive steps taken, including the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the drafting of a new law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination. It remained concerned about reports that refugees and migrants had been deported to neighbouring countries illegally, without following official procedures.

35. Chile noted the efforts made by the Government to make progress in the promotion and protection of all human rights, including a large number of institutional reforms and national plans in fulfilment of the recommendations accepted during the second review cycle.

36. China took note of the measures taken by the Government to protect minority groups, particularly to protect the rights of the Roma community. It supported the implementation of the Strategy for the Roma 2014–2020 and the relevant national action plans.

37. Croatia welcomed the efforts to adopt anti-discrimination legislation and to combat gender-based violence. It encouraged the Government to further strengthen the efficiency of the judicial system in order to ensure its independence, and to continue taking all necessary measures to combat corruption and organized crime.

38. Czechia welcomed the efforts of the Government to make progress in areas such as the rule of law and justice system reform, measures taken to improve the treatment of prisoners and detainees and the expansion of the list of discriminatory grounds in the draft law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination.

39. Denmark highlighted that indigenous peoples were among the most marginalized populations around the world, often facing discrimination and exploitative labour conditions violating their human rights. It highlighted International Labour Organization (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (No. 169), as an important tool for securing and strengthening norms concerning the rights of indigenous people.

40. Estonia welcomed the ratification of the Amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on the crime of aggression, as recommended in the previous cycle of the universal periodic review. It encouraged the Government to take further steps to accelerate progress in improving the climate for civil society organizations, human rights defenders and the media.

41. Responding to questions, the delegation of North Macedonia said that the issue of the Roma was high on the government agenda. There was a minister without portfolio from the Roma community dealing with the issue of the Roma. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy was responsible for interministerial coordination to implement the Strategy for the Roma and a government coordination body was in charge of implementing the different national action plans under the Strategy. In addition to the minister without portfolio, two members of parliament, three heads of department in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and several officers in the Ministry working on the implementation of the Strategy for the Roma were from the Roma community. The position of the new Government was to concentrate all the projects for the Roma community under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

42. As a result of a project for the inclusion of Roma children in preschool education free of charge, up to 500 Roma children were currently attending preschool. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy requested the local authorities to cover the costs from the funds

provided to them by the Ministry. Also, 14 Roma information centres, which had been run by municipalities, were expected to become part of the social work centres by June 2019. The focus in education was on increasing the number of Roma children at all education levels. Every year 600 Roma children received scholarships. There were about 250 Roma students in university. To improve the living situation of the Roma, a social mapping project was being carried out in 14 municipalities. Following the mapping, their houses would be renovated or assistance would be provided to them to move to new housing through a project supported by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

43. From April to November 2018, there had been an open call for all persons without identification to register in a special electronic registry. At the same time, mobile teams established to find persons without identification had discovered 670 unregistered persons. In 2019, the aim of the Government was to provide unregistered persons with access to education, health protection and employment. To ensure that unregistered persons enjoyed their rights a special law had been drafted and three laws would have to be amended.

44. The State was committed to aligning the definition of torture in the Criminal Code with the definition in the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which would be done as part of the process of amending the Criminal Code that was currently under way. Activities were also continuing to reform the judicial system, with the aim of achieving its impartiality and independence.

45. The amendments to the Law on the Judicial Council and the Law on the Council of Public Prosecutors were of paramount importance. The draft revised law on the judicial council amended the criteria for the evaluation of judges and public prosecutors and redefined the criteria for the appointment of judges and public prosecutors in line with the opinion of the European Commission for Democracy through Law.

46. A number of reforms had been made to improve the transparency of the judicial system. For example, the Judicial-Media Council had been established as a new instrument to promote transparency.

47. A special unit of the Public Prosecutor's Office dedicated to addressing crimes relating to corruption was making an important contribution to the fight against corruption. In 2017, 29 new high-profile corruption cases had been registered, 23 of which were being handled by the special unit.

48. In November 2018 the Law Amending the Criminal Code had been adopted. In order to prevent hate crimes effectively, through the amendments a definition of hate crime had been introduced into the Criminal Code and elements of hate crime had been incorporated in the definition of other crimes.

49. In coordination with the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of the Interior had been actively involved in the prevention of hatred on the grounds of gender, nationality, religion or sexual orientation, in the media and on the Internet. The unit of the Public Prosecutor's Office specializing in computer crime and digital forensics also acted upon complaints by non-governmental organizations and individuals.

50. In accordance with the scope of its competencies, in the period 2014–2018 (November) the Ministry of the Interior had registered 46 criminal acts of hatred, for which 59 perpetrators had been reported.

51. In the course of 2018, 29 hate crimes had been recorded, for which 46 perpetrators had been reported, whereas in previous years only 3 to 6 such crimes had been registered annually.

52. It was worth noting that in 2018 four criminal offences of "spreading of racist and xenophobic material through a computer system" had been registered for which four perpetrators had been reported.

53. Trafficking of children with a view to their sexual exploitation, labour exploitation or forced marriage remained the prevailing forms of human trafficking. In 2018, there had been an increase in the identification of victims by State institutions. A specialized State shelter for the care of victims of human trafficking provided safe accommodation and all the services available under the direct help and support programme.

54. By January 2018 overcrowding in prisons had already improved through the construction of new prisons and the provision of alternative sanctions, such as probation. Nine probation offices had been opened in cities across the country. Health-care workers were employed in all penitentiary institutions and in the 2019 national budget there was an allocation to cover the health insurance of all convicted persons. There was an external mechanism to prevent mistreatment of prisoners by prison staff. A new draft law also addressed shortcomings in the prison system, acting upon the recommendations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

55. The new draft law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination extended the grounds for discrimination and professionalized the work of the commission for protection against discrimination. Moreover, in the draft law, a new legal procedure, *actio popularis*, was introduced and provision was made for the use of new types of evidence, such as situation testing and statistics. The law also provided for the introduction of exemptions from court fees in court proceedings. All ministries had committed to preparing operational plans on gender equality in line with the National Action Plan for Gender Equality.

56. The National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention had three main objectives: aligning the national legal framework with the Convention; establishing specialized services for the protection of victims of gender-based and domestic violence; and undertaking prevention activities. In December 2018, the Government had begun to draft a law on gender-based violence, which would provide for a system for the prevention of and protection against all forms of gender-based violence. Femicide would also be redefined in the Criminal Code as a separate criminal offence. By 2023, specialized services would gradually be established in accordance with the Convention.

57. To ensure the inclusion of Roma children in the education process, the Government had been continuously providing scholarships, mentorships and tutors to children from Roma families. As a result, the rate of school dropout among the Roma community had been reduced. Other vulnerable groups were also supported, especially children from poor families.

58. Measures were being taken to ensure that the infrastructure was in place for children with physical disabilities to have equal access to school buildings. A project for integrated education completed in 2017 had had good results, and a new inter-ethnic integration education project had been developed.

59. Under the 2017 amendments to the Law on Textbooks Used in Primary and Secondary Education, a total of 22 school textbooks had been withdrawn as they had been found to include hate speech and stereotypes. The Government recognized that access to assistive technology was one of the preconditions for more effective, inclusive and quality education. However, currently it was only available in some schools.

60. The National Coordination Body on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had prepared an action plan for 2019 on the basis of the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, following the dialogue in September in 2018. The Government strongly believed that the realization of the measures in the action plan would significantly improve living conditions for all persons with disabilities.

61. Increased efforts were being made to reduce neonatal mortality rates and improve access to and the utilization of sexual and reproductive health services, such as family planning, contraception and abortion. Measures had been taken to strengthen the health system by placing a particular focus on primary health care and using an integrated approach to the delivery of health services, aimed at improving not only the coordination between public health, primary, secondary and tertiary care institutions but also their cooperation and coordination with social care services.

62. The Government was committed to the full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which would be an important factor for establishing intercommunity peace and a crucial step for achieving an inclusive multi-ethnic society. Currently a three-year

national strategy for implementation of the Agreement, called ONE Society for All, was being drafted.

63. The Government had put in place processes that aimed to create an environment that enabled freedom of speech. It condemned hate speech at all levels. The protection of journalists was high on the Government's agenda and the Ministry of the Interior had responded accordingly to cases connected with the safety of the journalists.

64. Amendments to the law on audio and audiovisual media services had been adopted by the parliament in late 2018. The whole process had been conducted in an inclusive manner and had been preceded by a wide consultation process. An open, public advertisement for members of the board of the Public Broadcasting Service and the board of the agency for audio and audiovisual media services had been published. The selection of the members would be transparent at the public session. The new amendments to the law on audio and audiovisual media services would provide a transparent, independent, efficient and accountable Public Broadcasting Service and media regulatory body, and would receive sustainable funding from the national budget.

65. France welcomed the positive steps that had been taken by the Government in the field of human rights and in strengthening the rule of law. It highlighted that those efforts should continue to be pursued in the long term.

66. Georgia commended the authorities for developing and implementing numerous strategies and national plans, including the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System, the National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination 2016–2020, the National Equality and Non-Discrimination Strategy and the National Strategy for Gender Equality and its national action plan.

67. Germany welcomed the efforts to protect the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and the Government's demonstration of support to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community. It remained concerned by some elements of the country's legislation and practice, in particular regarding the independence of the media and the press, conditions of detention in prisons and the living conditions of persons with disabilities.

68. Honduras welcomed the Government's achievements since the previous review, noted with great satisfaction the voluntary commitments made by the Government and offered its support.

69. Iceland welcomed the proposed amendments to the law against discrimination that would extend the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

70. Indonesia acknowledged the adoption of the new Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022 and the establishment of the Judicial-Media Council to promote the transparency of the judicial system. It also took note with appreciation of the adoption of some amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman.

71. The Islamic Republic of Iran called upon the Government to address the continued practice of xenophobia, racial and religious discrimination against the country's minorities, including Muslims and Roma, in particular with respect to education and health care. It also highlighted the need to address the forced deportation of migrants and refugees.

72. Iraq noted that the legislative steps taken to reform the justice system, achieve gender equality, alleviate poverty and reduce social exclusion would contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights.

73. Ireland welcomed the steps being taken through several strategies aimed at making education more inclusive, particularly for students from minority groups. However, it was concerned with the lack of attention being paid to discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

74. Italy welcomed achievements since the second cycle review, in particular the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the adoption of a national action plan for its implementation, as well as measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

75. Lithuania commended the Government for its commitment to human rights and acknowledged the progress made since the previous review.
76. Maldives praised efforts to strengthen the justice system through the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022. It commended the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence and the implementation of the National Strategy on Alleviating Poverty and Social Exclusion.
77. Mexico welcomed the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022 and the National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination on the Grounds of Ethnic Affiliation, Age, Mental or Physical Disability and Gender 2016–2020. It noted the efforts to combat crimes connected with government corruption and to provide free health care to migrants.
78. Montenegro commended the Government's efforts to adopt constitutional amendments, thus fulfilling its constitutional obligations under the Prespa agreement signed in June 2018. It welcomed the adoption of the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022 and its action plan to guarantee the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary. It also welcomed the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and its action plan.
79. Myanmar welcomed the human rights achievements since the second review cycle, but highlighted that there remained room for improvement regarding the implementation of the recommendations.
80. The Netherlands commended the establishment of the special parliamentary advocacy group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex issues but remained concerned about discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation. It welcomed the new media law, while expressing concerns about freedom of expression and the need to ensure a functioning, transparent media industry and the greater safety of journalists.
81. Oman noted that the national report reflected the importance given to the protection and promotion of human rights, as shown in the so-called Plan 3-6-9, which defined priority areas for reform, such as the justice system, the public administration and security.
82. Paraguay noted the efforts to harmonize legislation with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) with regard to the Office of the Ombudsman and in the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022. It was concerned by the situation of the Roma regarding access to health care and education and the enjoyment of other basic rights and services.
83. The Philippines welcomed the adoption of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 and the efforts to address domestic violence by adopting and amending legislation. It commended the adoption of the National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and its action plan for 2017–2020, and the implementation of measures to strengthen the protection of children against trafficking.
84. Portugal welcomed the adoption of the amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman with a view to fulfilling criteria for A accreditation status in accordance with the Paris Principles.
85. The Republic of Korea noted the acceptance by North Macedonia of 98 out of 104 second cycle recommendations and the significant progress made in their implementation. It welcomed the five-year Strategy for Reform of the Justice System, which aimed to strengthen the institutional basis for an independent, impartial and efficient judiciary. It commended the cross-ministerial decision to provide free health care to migrants and the dedicated action plan for underage migrants.
86. The Republic of Moldova commended the actions to prevent discrimination against women and minorities through a wide range of initiatives aimed at achieving equitable treatment for all.
87. The Russian Federation welcomed the strategies and national plans on issues such as gender equality and non-discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, age, psychosocial or physical disability financed from the State budget. It was concerned about the situation in the justice system, which appeared to be suffering from interference from abroad.

88. Senegal praised the specific action plans in key areas for the promotion and protection of human rights. The reform of the justice system, the reduction of overcrowding in prisons, the provision of health care for detainees and improved training for penitentiary staff, among others, demonstrated the good faith of the authorities regarding the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights.

89. Serbia commended the adoption of several national strategies aimed at improving the human rights situation for all categories of persons and the establishment of the National Coordination Body on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in May 2018.

90. Singapore commended the measures taken to strengthen the Office of the Ombudsman, the adoption of a Strategy for the Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022 and the establishment of a new National Coordination Body on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also commended the efforts to promote inclusive education through the Government’s Strategy for Integrated Education, the Strategy for the Roma 2014–2020 and the Education Strategy 2018–2025, which facilitated equal access to education for all.

91. Slovakia welcomed the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence. It highlighted the human rights challenges faced by vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities and persons belonging to ethnic minorities. It appreciated the positive steps taken to address hate crime and hate speech and gender-based discrimination. It called on the authorities to provide the necessary support and resources to relevant human rights institutions.

92. Slovenia welcomed the implementation of the universal periodic review recommendations on the right to education and the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds in the draft non-discrimination legislation. It commended the ratification of the Rome Statute. Slovenia encouraged the Government to strengthen its efforts to improve prison conditions, ensure the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, integrate the Roma into society and promote gender equality.

93. Spain appreciated the continued progress in promoting and protecting human rights internationally. It welcomed the Administrative Court’s legal recognition of gender identity, while regretting that many transgender persons continued to be subjected to discriminatory or violent acts. Moreover, Spain was concerned about the high levels of infant mortality.

94. The State of Palestine acknowledged the efforts made to build an independent, impartial, professional and efficient justice system, including through adopting the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System 2017–2022. It welcomed the initiatives to combat discrimination, including the National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination.

95. Sweden welcomed targeted policies and national strategies, especially those on gender-based violence, the development of the penitentiary system and the inclusion of the Roma. However, it urged North Macedonia to strengthen respect for human rights and the rule of law and to improve their practical implementation.

96. Switzerland hailed efforts to improve the human rights situation and to strengthen the independence and efficiency of the justice system. It also hailed the creation of a new oversight body for police activities. Switzerland expressed concerns with regard to the lack of progress in protecting children’s rights, improving prison conditions and protecting the rights of migrants and asylum seekers.

97. Tunisia welcomed the Government’s consultation with civil society during the preparation of the national report and the legislation adopted since the previous universal periodic review cycle. It praised the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework through the ratification and implementation of international conventions, the reform of the judiciary and the national strategies on gender equality and the fight against domestic violence.

98. Turkey appreciated the efforts to fully implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and the establishment of a National Coordination Body on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

99. Ukraine welcomed the ratification of a number of international human rights instruments, including the Istanbul Convention. It praised the adoption of the Strategy for Reform of the Justice System, as well as strategies and national action plans on promoting gender equality, non-discrimination and on combating human trafficking. It commended the efforts to harmonize the national legal and institutional framework with international human rights instruments.

100. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland recognized the progress made by the Government, particularly through the adoption of a new media law, constructive engagement with civil society organizations on judicial reforms and parliamentary oversight of intelligence agencies. It welcomed the establishment of the national unit for countering illegal migration and human trafficking. It urged the development of effective legislation to counter hate crimes, tackle corruption in prisons and investigate all reported crimes against journalists.

101. The United States of America was encouraged by the progress made in increasing the transparency, accountability and independence of the judiciary. However, it noted the need for sustained efforts to implement reforms to combat and prosecute high-level corruption in order to restore public trust in State institutions and in the fairness and integrity of the judiciary. There were also remaining challenges regarding widespread discrimination, including some case of violence targeting ethnic minorities and Roma.

102. Uruguay commended the adoption of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020, the Strategy for the Roma 2014–2020 and the proposed amendments to the anti-discrimination law to include sexual orientation and gender identity as prohibited grounds of discrimination. It recognized the commitment of the Government to the international instruments for the universal protection and promotion of human rights.

103. The head of the delegation thanked the participants for the frank dialogue and reiterated the commitment of the Government of North Macedonia to upholding and protecting human rights.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

104. **The following recommendations will be examined by North Macedonia, which will provide responses in due time, but no later than the forty-first session of the Human Rights Council:**

104.1 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (Croatia) (Slovakia);**

104.2 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, as previously recommended (Portugal);**

104.3 **Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Czechia);**

104.4 **Ratify the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), of the International Labour Organization (Denmark);**

104.5 **Advance consideration of the ratification of human rights instruments that have already been signed (Georgia);**

104.6 **Consider adhering to international human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party, including the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, among others (Honduras);**

- 104.7 Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia) (Uruguay);
- 104.8 Ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 104.9 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Montenegro);
- 104.10 Consider taking steps towards accession to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Philippines);
- 104.11 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Spain);
- 104.12 Consider ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Armenia);
- 104.13 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and accept a country visit by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (Ukraine);
- 104.14 Accede to the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Ukraine);
- 104.15 Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for United Nations treaty body elections (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 104.16 Consider ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Uruguay);
- 104.17 Continue its efforts to reduce discrimination and provide equal opportunities, implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 and enact the proposed law on protection against discrimination (Bhutan);
- 104.18 Continue the efforts to fully implement the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the National Strategy for Gender Equality (Bulgaria);
- 104.19 Ensure effective mainstreaming of a human rights-based approach into legislation, policies and budgets that affect young people (Bulgaria);
- 104.20 Further promote economic and social development and protect the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups (China);
- 104.21 Ensure the independent and sustainable functioning of the national oversight institutions, including the communications control agency, the future State commission for the prevention of corruption, the coordinating body for anti-discrimination measures and the agency for media and audiovisual services (France);
- 104.22 Take further steps towards fulfilling the criteria for A accreditation status for the national human rights institution (Georgia);
- 104.23 Strengthen efforts to ensure that the work of the Ombudsman is in line with the Paris Principles (Indonesia);
- 104.24 Conclude the necessary processes to ensure the establishment of a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles (Mexico);
- 104.25 Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to implement national action plans and national strategies (Myanmar);

- 104.26 Continue the policy of harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards (Oman);
- 104.27 Establish national mechanisms for the presentation of reports to international human rights bodies and to follow up on recommendations received through an effective institutional coordination system in order to make progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Paraguay);
- 104.28 Establish a coordination mechanism to ensure the follow-up and implementation of different human rights action plans (Senegal);
- 104.29 Consolidate the national dialogue to facilitate regional and community integration (Senegal);
- 104.30 Amend the Law on the Ombudsman in order to be fully in line with the Paris Principles and provide the Office of the Ombudsman with the necessary human and financial resources to ensure the effective and independent implementation of its mandate (Slovakia);
- 104.31 Ensure that the draft amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman are in line with the Paris Principles (Ukraine);
- 104.32 Ensure that the national unit for countering illegal migration and human trafficking is adequately resourced, and that the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Office increase funding to provide further training for staff to avoid the Unit relying on donors (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 104.33 Take the necessary measures to effectively eliminate and combat corruption, including by appointing a new anti-corruption commission that is free from political pressure or influence (United States of America);
- 104.34 Adopt and implement measures to strengthen the institutions in charge of preventing and fighting corruption and encourage, from the highest political level, a more proactive attitude to all actors engaged (Austria);
- 104.35 Continue strengthening the fight against discrimination and incitement to violence against minority and vulnerable groups and ensure that crimes motivated by prejudice are effectively investigated and their perpetrators punished (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 104.36 Adopt legislation on protection and prevention against discrimination and ensure its effective implementation and harmonization with other relevant laws (Slovakia);
- 104.37 Take steps to adopt the newly drafted law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination as soon as possible (Canada);
- 104.38 Ensure swift adoption of the law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination, prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- 104.39 Take further steps to effectively investigate and prosecute hate crime and hate speech against vulnerable groups, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Canada);
- 104.40 Address discrimination against women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, including by removing discriminatory references to gender and gender identity in high school and university textbooks (Canada);
- 104.41 Investigate and prosecute hate crimes perpetuated against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Chile);
- 104.42 Take further steps to eradicate discrimination based on sexual orientation (Estonia);

- 104.43 **Strengthen the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (France);**
- 104.44 **Effectively investigate and prosecute hate crimes, including against journalists and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Iceland);**
- 104.45 **Take appropriate measures to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and to align the national anti-discrimination legislation with international standards, in particular by increasing efforts to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (Italy);**
- 104.46 **Fight hate speech, both online and offline, and hate crimes against minorities, including the Roma and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, by adopting legislation based on international human rights standards (Lithuania);**
- 104.47 **Take all steps to ensure that legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is fully implemented (Ireland);**
- 104.48 **Swiftly and without further delay, adopt the new anti-discrimination legislation aimed at protecting persons against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Netherlands);**
- 104.49 **Modify the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination with a view to expressly prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (Spain);**
- 104.50 **Continue its efforts to eliminate all discrimination, by adopting the draft amendment to the law against discrimination and by prosecuting hate crimes, in particular against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community (Switzerland);**
- 104.51 **Speed up the adoption of the draft law on the prevention of and protection against discrimination and explicitly prohibit discrimination based on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (Belgium);**
- 104.52 **Strengthen measures in the legislative area to combat gender-based discrimination (Honduras);**
- 104.53 **Revise the country's Criminal Code in order to ensure that it contains a clear and comprehensive definition of racial discrimination, consistent with article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Islamic Republic of Iran);**
- 104.54 **Continue reforming the national legislation, including by incorporating a definition of racial discrimination in line with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Mexico);**
- 104.55 **Enhance efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination, including by strengthening the legislation to ensure gender equality in the fields of labour and social rights (Lithuania);**
- 104.56 **Take effective measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities, especially women and girls (Portugal);**
- 104.57 **Continue efforts to fully implement the national strategy for equality and non-discrimination for 2016–2020, including by expediting legislative procedures (Republic of Korea);**
- 104.58 **Integrate more the concerns of minorities, indigenous peoples and stateless persons in existing political programmes (Senegal);**
- 104.59 **Continue promoting gender equality in order to explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination (Armenia);**

- 104.60 **Redouble efforts to fight against discrimination for reasons of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or for any other reason (Uruguay);**
- 104.61 **Raise awareness about discrimination and its different forms and manifestations, as well as the relevant protection mechanisms, through targeted information campaigns (Austria);**
- 104.62 **Consider including in the Criminal Code a definition of torture that is in line with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Chile);**
- 104.63 **Accelerate progress towards ensuring the protection of human rights defenders against physical attacks, threats, verbal assaults and stigmatization (Estonia);**
- 104.64 **Accelerate the process of adoption and amendment of legislation under the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention 2018–2023 (Paraguay);**
- 104.65 **Carry out and complete a review of national legislation so as to harmonize it with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention (Turkey);**
- 104.66 **In enforcing the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence, pay particular attention to providing adequate support to victims of domestic violence (Albania);**
- 104.67 **Strengthen measures to prevent violence against women and children (France);**
- 104.68 **Intensify efforts to strengthen the legislative framework against gender-based violence, including by the adoption of a definition of gender-based violence and incrimination of all forms of gender-based violence (Montenegro);**
- 104.69 **Take appropriate measures to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including domestic violence, in particular by implementing the Istanbul Convention (Italy);**
- 104.70 **Continue its efforts in implementing legislation and strategies to combat violence against women and children (Philippines);**
- 104.71 **Closely monitor the reporting and treatment of cases of domestic violence in rural areas (Republic of Moldova);**
- 104.72 **Amend the Criminal Code to criminalize marital rape (Sweden);**
- 104.73 **Remove the requirement of penetration in the definition of rape (Sweden);**
- 104.74 **Strengthen efforts to implement legislation and national action plans on domestic violence and violence against women (Slovenia);**
- 104.75 **Carry out thorough, impartial investigations of cases of abuse of authority by law enforcement personnel (Russian Federation);**
- 104.76 **Immediately implement measures to investigate complaints of ill-treatment in prisons, improve material conditions in detention centres and reduce overcrowding (Spain);**
- 104.77 **Continue to reform the penitentiary system, particularly to strengthen oversight mechanisms, in line with the recommendations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, so as to provide much-needed information on the treatment of convicts and detainees (Sweden);**
- 104.78 **Take effective measures to bring conditions of detention in line with international standards, notably with regard to the overcrowding of prisons,**

and ensure appropriate follow-up of all cases of alleged ill-treatment (Germany);

104.79 Improve the living conditions of people in closed institutions and ensure their full access to health care (Germany);

104.80 Take immediate action to put an end to ill-treatment in prisons, improve material conditions in detention facilities and reduce overcrowding (Islamic Republic of Iran);

104.81 Take immediate steps to improve prison conditions, directed in particular at reducing overcrowding and ensuring the safety of prisoners (Australia);

104.82 Carry out further work to reduce overcrowding in prisons and to improve the detention conditions of convicted persons, including access to quality medical services (Belarus);

104.83 Improve the conditions in detention by fighting against corruption and mistreatment, as well as through improving the health care provided (Switzerland);

104.84 Continue efforts to fight against violence against women and domestic violence and take appropriate measures to protect the victims (Tunisia);

104.85 Continue to implement the National Strategy for the Development of the Penitentiary System and the Strategy for the Establishment of a Probation Service (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);

104.86 Guarantee accountability for the serious crimes committed during the 2001 conflict (Chile);

104.87 Pursue its actions and initiatives aimed at implementation of judicial reforms, the promotion of the rights of vulnerable groups and the harmonization of the national legislation with international human rights standards (Benin);

104.88 Continue with reforms in order to build an independent, impartial, professional and efficient justice system (Estonia);

104.89 Implement credible and visible reforms to effectively strengthen the rule of law, including ensuring the independence of judges and the reliability of proceedings (France);

104.90 Provide training for judicial authorities, based on international human rights standards and the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, on the right to equality and the prohibition of discrimination (Iceland);

104.91 Continue reforming the judiciary to ensure its independence and judicial security and the protection of the rights and freedoms of all the country's inhabitants (Mexico);

104.92 Continue to take measures to improve the judicial system and reform the law enforcement agencies (Russian Federation);

104.93 Continue to invest in the training of judges, public prosecutors and those providing professional legal services to strengthen the rule of law and the justice system (Singapore);

104.94 Guarantee and protect the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary and ensure the right to a fair trial (State of Palestine);

104.95 Fully implement the recommendations of the European Commission and the Council of Europe related to the reform of the judicial system (United States of America);

- 104.96 Investigate allegations and prosecute all instances of political pressure, intimidation, misuse of administrative resources and vote buying (Iceland);
- 104.97 Create a conducive environment for media pluralism and independence, ensure the safety of journalists and the media and guarantee proper and impartial investigation of all crimes committed against journalists (Czechia);
- 104.98 Amend legislation concerning media regulation in order to ensure a transparent and independent Public Broadcasting Service (Estonia);
- 104.99 Ensure respect for freedom of expression and the right to privacy, including online (Estonia);
- 104.100 Ensure a proper environment for and diversity in the media landscape (France);
- 104.101 Continue to promote an enabling environment for freedom of expression, ensure that journalists and writers can work freely and without fear of retribution for expressing critical opinions and ensure the independence and diversity of the media (Germany);
- 104.102 Take further steps to ensure that the importance of the protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression is recognized, by providing a safe and secure environment for civil society activists, human rights defenders and journalists to carry out their work (Ireland);
- 104.103 Improve protection of the right to freedom of information by aligning national legislation with international standards (Italy);
- 104.104 Ensure the protection of freedom of expression by adequately and promptly responding to attacks against journalists, as well as by further improving their labour and social rights (Lithuania);
- 104.105 Protect freedom of expression by ensuring a successful implementation of the new media law, providing a secure, fair and functioning market (Netherlands);
- 104.106 Guarantee the right to freedom of expression and association and take the necessary measures to protect journalists, demonstrators and human rights defenders (Portugal);
- 104.107 Put in place concrete measures to protect those who exercise their rights to freedom of expression and association from intimidation and violence (Republic of Korea);
- 104.108 Take concrete steps to promote an enabling environment for freedom of expression and to foster professionalism in and accurate reporting, including through strengthened independence of the Public Broadcasting Service (Austria);
- 104.109 Continue to increase actions in the fight against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and strengthen measures to detect and prevent these cases (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 104.110 Redouble efforts aimed at combating human trafficking (Honduras);
- 104.111 Continue to strengthen measures to combat trafficking in persons and ensure access to remedies for victims (Maldives);
- 104.112 Step up efforts to respond to trafficking in persons and ensure that perpetrators are adequately sanctioned (Myanmar);
- 104.113 Further strengthen efforts to enhance protection measures for vulnerable sectors against trafficking in persons (Philippines);

- 104.114 Take measures to combat trafficking in persons, systematically and vigorously investigate and prosecute perpetrators and ensure that, when convicted, they are adequately sanctioned (Republic of Moldova);
- 104.115 Further strengthen efforts in the area of combating trafficking in persons, including improving law enforcement practices with a view to bringing to justice and punishing the perpetrators, and provide victims of trafficking with protection and effective restoration of their rights (Belarus);
- 104.116 Continue efforts to promote gender equality in the labour market and in decision-making (Tunisia);
- 104.117 Take measures to ensure that the most disadvantaged and marginalized persons are fully protected under the social security system (Algeria);
- 104.118 Make medical abortion available and accessible throughout the country, in line with the World Health Organization safe abortion guidelines, and urgently remove waiting periods, biased counselling and unnecessary administrative burdens (Iceland);
- 104.119 Ensure universal coverage by the State health insurance of all costs related to sexual and reproductive health and modern contraceptive methods (Iceland);
- 104.120 Make all efforts to ensure that primary health-care services are available and accessible to all (Islamic Republic of Iran);
- 104.121 Intensify efforts to ensure that primary health-care services are available and accessible to all citizens, regardless of geographical location (Serbia);
- 104.122 Develop a primary health-care system that guarantees high-quality medical care for pregnant women and children (Spain);
- 104.123 Establish an effective mechanism to ensure the participation of civil society organizations and affected communities in the creation of national preventive programmes in the field of mother and child health (Ukraine);
- 104.124 Adopt a comprehensive programme on sexual and reproductive health rights, paying special attention to improving sexual education in schools (Belgium);
- 104.125 Ensure access for all women, including rural women and women from vulnerable groups, to reproductive health-care services (Iceland);
- 104.126 Continue efforts to provide access to education to children, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds (Bhutan);
- 104.127 Continue its efforts to make education more inclusive (Myanmar);
- 104.128 Take all necessary measures to promote inclusive education, making sure that minority groups are not neglected and that persons from vulnerable groups are fully integrated in the educational system (Portugal);
- 104.129 Take the necessary measures to eliminate criteria in educational programmes that discriminate against Roma children and adopt educational programmes that guarantee their right to education free from any discrimination (Argentina);
- 104.130 Step up efforts to promote inclusive education, especially for Roma children and children of other minority groups and children without personal documents (Serbia);
- 104.131 Take further steps to build a more inclusive society by ensuring that sufficient special educators are employed to support the integration of children with disabilities in primary and secondary schools in all municipalities (Singapore);

- 104.132 Continue efforts to reduce school dropout, especially of Roma girls (Slovenia);
- 104.133 Direct further efforts towards the inclusion of Roma in primary and secondary education, including by earmarking local and national budgets towards this end (Sweden);
- 104.134 Improve the quality and accessibility of the education system and the health-care system for children (Switzerland);
- 104.135 Continue efforts to provide education to all children, especially those living in rural areas (Tunisia);
- 104.136 Promote inclusive education, notably by improving the enrolment and retention of students from minority groups and of Roma students in particular, including in preschool education, and by ensuring access to education for all children, specifically those without identity documentation (Austria);
- 104.137 Intensify efforts to implement the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and to achieve equality between women and men in various fields (Iraq);
- 104.138 Continue efforts to promote women's participation in political and public life and in decision-making positions (Iraq);
- 104.139 Further increase the participation of women in the political and public sectors, particularly in decision-making positions (Republic of Moldova);
- 104.140 Strengthen the measures aimed at the eradication of forced marriage of girls and women, and take the necessary measures to punish cases of forced marriage (Argentina);
- 104.141 Strengthen efforts to protect the rights of children, in particular by promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system and by further preventing child, early and forced marriage (Italy);
- 104.142 Intensify efforts to fully implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement, to guarantee the construction of a democratic, functioning, multi-ethnic society, firmly based on the rule of law (Albania);
- 104.143 Ensure that there are no impediments to the preservation, expression and development of the cultural identity of all citizens, as previously recommended (Bulgaria);
- 104.144 Ensure that no disadvantage results for citizens who exercise their right to identify themselves as belonging to any ethnic group (Bulgaria);
- 104.145 Continue to promote the Strategy for the Roma 2014–2020 and to implement action plans for the social inclusion of Roma in employment, education, housing and health care, in addition to strengthening the status of Roma women in society (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- 104.146 Take further steps to improve the education, housing and social protection of Roma, particularly Roma women, including by promoting inclusion of Roma in the education system and decreasing the number of Roma children placed in special education (Canada);
- 104.147 Continue to redouble efforts to protect the rights of the Roma and other minority groups and to combat hate speech and acts of discrimination (China);
- 104.148 Make further efforts to improve the social inclusion of national minorities, in particular access to education and health-care services for women, children and people with disabilities (Croatia);
- 104.149 Take measures to increase the participation of Roma in public life and decision-making processes, using, as appropriate, the OHCHR guidelines

for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs (Czechia);

104.150 Continue to implement the strategy to strengthen the integration of the Roma people (France);

104.151 Better integrate minorities, particularly Albanians and Roma, in political, cultural and academic life (Mexico);

104.152 Further improve the social inclusion of the Roma and strengthen the status of Roma women in society (Oman);

104.153 Step up government efforts to design and implement public policies to guarantee the full enjoyment of fundamental rights, to improve the standard of living for the Roma population in the country (Paraguay);

104.154 Intensify efforts to eradicate discriminatory attitudes against the Roma people and improve their socioeconomic situation, and adopt measures that improve the participation of Roma in public life and in decision-making processes (Spain);

104.155 Intensify its efforts to eradicate structural discrimination against the Roma, to improve their socioeconomic status and to increase their participation in public life and decision-making processes (State of Palestine);

104.156 Fully implement the recommendations of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Strategy for the Roma 2014–2020, including recording every individual in the registry of births, in order to combat socioeconomic marginalization and labour discrimination faced by individuals belonging to the Roma community (United States of America);

104.157 Take further concrete and effective action to improve the living conditions and social and economic rights of the Roma community, including simplifying complex civil registration procedures which disproportionately affect them (Australia);

104.158 Intensify efforts to eradicate structural discrimination against Roma and improve their socioeconomic situation (Belgium);

104.159 Improve the concrete implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities (France);

104.160 Introduce adequate measures to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities and step up efforts to ensure their full inclusion (Germany);

104.161 Adopt measures to make mobility aids and functional devices, including affordable assistive technologies, available to persons with disabilities (Algeria);

104.162 Continue to strengthen measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls with disabilities (Maldives);

104.163 Ensure that persons with disabilities, particularly blind persons and persons with intellectual impairment, have the right to vote by secret ballot (Republic of Korea);

104.164 Provide adequate and affordable support to ensure that people with disabilities are able to access health, education and employment services and participate fully in society (Australia);

104.165 Intensify efforts to effectively implement the Strategy on the Integration of Refugees and Foreign Nationals 2015–2025, in order to enhance local integration programmes (Indonesia);

104.166 Ensure the protection of the rights of migrants and combat their trafficking (Iraq);

104.167 **Put an end to the policy of detention and expulsion of migrants and consider alternatives to detention of asylum seekers, particularly unaccompanied minors (Mexico);**

104.168 **Put an end to detention, refoulement and abusive expulsions of migrants and asylum seekers and ensure their proper and due registration (Switzerland);**

104.169 **Ensure the protection of the rights of migrants and asylum seekers in accordance with international standards, including the use of alternatives to detention of unaccompanied minors where available (Belarus).**

105. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of North Macedonia was headed by H.E. Mr. Andrej Zhernovski, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and composed of the following members:

- Ms. Svetlana Geleva, Deputy Director for Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - Mr. Mile Boshnjakovski, Spokesperson of the Government;
 - Mr. Jovica Stojanovikj, Director for Enforcement of Sanctions, Ministry of Justice;
 - Ms. Lidija Dojchinovska, State Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister of the Government;
 - Ms. Aneta Trpevska, State Advisor on EU Integrations, Ministry of Education and Science;
 - Ms. Maja Petkovska Leses, Special Adviser, Cabinet of the Minister without Portfolio in Charge of Communications, Accountability and Transparency;
 - Mr. Dejan Andonov, Head of Department for Internal Control, Criminal Investigation and Professional Standards, Ministry of Interior;
 - Ms. Tanja Kikerekova, Head of Human Rights Department, Ministry of Justice;
 - Ms. Mabela Kamberi, Head of Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy;
 - Ms. Gordana Bukreska, Chief Inspector, Department for Internal Control, Criminal Investigation and Professional Standards, Ministry of Interior;
 - Mr. Darko Docinski, Deputy Head of Labor Law and Employment Policy Department, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy;
 - Ms. Simona Atanasova, Member of the Cabinet, Ministry of Health;
 - Ms. Stanislava Chulikj, Member of the Cabinet of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs;
 - Ms. Elena Zdravkovska, Desk Officer at the Directorate for Multilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - Ms. Sejhan Zejnel, Third Secretary at the Permanent Mission in Geneva.
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