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**Remarks by H. E. Mr Vojislav Šuc,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia at the adoption of the
Report of Universal Periodic Review of Slovenia
28th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Geneva, 19 March 2015**

Opening remarks

Thank you, Mr President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to address you today on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia, and I have the pleasant duty also to reiterate once again our **thanks** to the members of the troika for their work in support of our review, and to all the delegations for their constructive engagement.

We attach great **importance** to the UPR process, which we see as an important mechanism that helps us strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights at the national level.

I turn straight to our **responses to the recommendations** received:

All recommendations were carefully examined by members of an interdepartmental working group from all government ministries who prepared a proposal of reactions for the consideration of the Government. The Cabinet of ministers then took the final decision regarding our official response which has been made available on the UPR website.

Our review and the recommendations received were further discussed in the competent bodies of the National Assembly (Commission for Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities and Committee on Foreign Policy) and with the Human Rights Ombudsperson. The Government also informed civil society organizations about the UPR review and the recommendations received. To ensure full transparency towards the public, the documentation related to the UPR of Slovenia has been translated to Slovenian and made available through the web page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I would like to also take this opportunity to offer some **additional information** on some of the topics addressed during the review:

Gender equality and women's rights:

Slovenia attaches great importance to gender equality, human rights and the empowerment of women both nationally and internationally. The government is committed to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all.

We received several recommendations to further promote gender equality and to tackle domestic violence and violence against women and it is my pleasure to report that Slovenia ratified the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in the beginning of February.

The government is also preparing a new national resolution on equal opportunities of women and men 2015–2020 that foresees additional measures to tackle gender inequalities in Slovenia from different perspectives, such as economic independence, work-family balance, gender stereotypes, social inclusion, health, participation in decision-making, violence against women and foreign policy and development cooperation.

Trafficking in human beings:

The issue of trafficking in human beings is very important to Slovenia as a country of origin, transit and final destination of trafficking, although the numbers we record are relatively small.

In January, a new comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking in human beings – a biannual action plan – has been adopted by the government. The action plan includes provisions which will contribute to the implementation of recommendations on trafficking that we received during the review.

Roma:

There are approximately 10.000 Roma living in Slovenia and measures to address their needs are included in many sectorial policies and laws. We recognize that members of the Roma community sometimes find themselves in an underprivileged position and may be more exposed to discrimination, and we are taking steps to address this situation.

The overarching government document for improving the situation of Roma in Slovenia is currently the National Programme of Measures for Roma 2010–2015. The government is already preparing a new national programme of measures for the

period 2016–2021, taking into account also the UPR recommendations received on this topic. Let me stress that representatives of the Roma are included in the preparation of the programme of measures.

Equality Body:

Equality is a constitutional right in Slovenia. Measures to combat discrimination are included in various national policies and in legislation.

We received several recommendations to strengthen the existing equality body and I'm happy to report that the government is committed to strengthening this institution and is currently considering different options for this.

LGBTI:

The Slovenian government is committed to non-discrimination, including of LGBTI persons. As we have reported in November, the government has put forward a new draft law on same-sex civil partnerships in mid-October, but at the time, the legislative procedure had not yet been completed. I'm pleased to report that the National Assembly has since adopted amendments to the Law on Marriage and Family Relations which grant equal status to same-sex and heterosexual unions.

Mr. President,

Allow me to also say a few words on how we intend to proceed with the monitoring of **implementation** of accepted recommendations:

The interdepartmental working group that has been active already in the preparatory phase of the UPR process and in the assessment of recommendations received will also monitor progress made with regard to the implementation of recommendations. Regular reporting on implementation will also be made to the Inter-departmental Commission on Human Rights, which is the body that coordinates Slovenia's reporting to international human rights mechanisms. Both bodies will report to the government, which will be kept abreast of progress.

Furthermore, we will be preparing once again a voluntary mid-term report on the implementation of recommendations.

Finally, I wish to reiterate Slovenia's full **support to UPR process**. This unique peer-review mechanism is instrumental to strengthening respect for and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms at all levels. As a candidate for membership in the Human Rights Council for the period 2016–2018, Slovenia is pledging to work for the advancement of human rights in international human rights forums, including through active engagement in the UPR process.

Thank you!

Closing remarks

Thank you, Mr. President.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to thank all speakers for their comments and remarks. I will convey them to my Government and I am convinced that they will be given due consideration.

The Government of of Slovenia is committed to implementing accepted recommendations. As I have pointed out at the beginning of today's discussion, we have already adopted some measures that contribute to the implementation of UPR recommendations and will be taking further concrete steps in this regard.

We're looking forward to our next review in the 3rd UPR cycle and hope for the continuation of fruitful and constructive dialogue.

Thank you!