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Draft report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Bulgaria

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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 ninth session from 1 to 12 November 2010. The review of Bulgaria was held at the 7th meeting, on 4 November 2010. The delegation of Bulgaria was headed by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nickolay Mladenov. At its 11th meeting, held on 8 November 2010, the Working Group adopted the report on Bulgaria.
2. On 21 June 2010, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Bulgaria: Bangladesh, Mauritania and Poland.
3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to resolution 5/1, the following documents were issued for the review of Bulgaria:
 - (a) A national report submitted/written presentation made in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) (A/HRC/WG.6/9/BGR/1) and (A/HRC/WG.6/9/BGR/1/Corr.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.6/9/BGR/2) and (A/HRC/WG.6/9/BGR/2/Corr.1 and 2);
 - (c) A summary prepared by OHCHR in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) (A/HRC/WG.6/9/BGR/3).
4. A list of questions prepared in advance by the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Bulgaria through the troika. Those questions are available on the extranet of the universal periodic review.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

5. During the interactive dialogue, 45 delegations made statements. A number of delegations thanked Bulgaria for its cooperation with the universal periodic review mechanism and commended the delegation for the constructive dialogue initiated with civil society during the preparation of its national report, and for the comprehensiveness of its national report as well as its presentation. They also welcomed the detailed replies given to advance questions and other comments made during the interactive dialogue. Recommendations made during the dialogue are found in section II of the present report.

A. Presentation by the State under review

6. The head of the delegation, Mr. Mladenov, stated that Bulgaria was a party to the core international human rights treaties and had voluntarily agreed to the most far-reaching scrutiny of its human rights records, including binding court judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, with regard to individual complaints. The Minister also stated that Bulgaria was bound by the high standards and aspirations enshrined in the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights, following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009.

7. The Minister acknowledged the valuable contributions made by civil society and non-governmental organizations throughout the transparent process of consultation in the preparation of its national report. He remained fully committed to continuing both the broad inter-ministerial and public dialogue with stakeholders, so as to ensure the necessary follow-up to the universal periodic review process.

8. In his opening statement, he addressed a number of advance questions.
9. With regard to the existence of an independent national human rights institution acting in accordance with the Paris Principles, the Minister confirmed that such an institution existed in the Office of the Ombudsman; however, the Ombudsman had not yet formally undertaken the requisite steps for accreditation in accordance with the Principles. The Government expected that an application for accreditation would be submitted during the course of this year or in 2011.
10. Concerning steps to improve access and the provision of public services and facilities to the Roma population in order to improve their standard of living, the Minister recognized that Roma communities faced specific social and economic challenges that needed to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. The Government had taken a series of measures to ensure the full integration of Roma into the mainstream of society, through the introduction of special school assistants, an expanding network of health-care mediators, and employment mediators. Another promising project was the Social Inclusion Project, implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which supported low-income families belonging to minority groups that had experienced difficulties integrating into the labour market; the Project also envisaged setting up services to meet the educational and health-care needs of children. In addition, representatives of the Roma communities were actively involved in a programme funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, which targeted rural areas.
11. With respect to the protection of children's rights, with a special focus on the well-being of children within the child-care system, he stated that in 2008, Parliament had adopted the National Strategy for Children 2008-2018, which defined priority areas and actions for improvement. All outdated child-care institutions inherited from the past would be closed in the next 15 years and gradually replaced by a network of community-based services, with the first priority being the closure of legacy institutions for the medical and social care of children up to 3 years of age. In the meantime, the conditions in State and municipal child-care institutions had to be improved. The Government had also adopted a policy document for de-institutionalization, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and with the involvement of 23 non-governmental organisations and the United Nations Children's Fund. An Action Plan had been formulated that envisaged the implementation of several projects over the next 15 years.
12. Regarding the equal treatment and protection from discrimination of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, he stated that discrimination based on sexual orientation was prohibited under the Protection against Discrimination Act, whose scope extended beyond the minimal requirements of the European Union *acquis communautaire*. In the event of discrimination, a number of national remedies existed, ranging from addressing the Commission for the Protection against Discrimination to the court system.
13. Concerning torture, he stated that Bulgaria had signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and that its swift ratification was a matter of priority. The use of torture or any form of degrading treatment was prohibited by both the Constitution and domestic legislation. Furthermore, Ministry of Interior regulations were aimed at preventing discrimination and safeguarding respect for the human rights of detainees. In all cases involving alleged police violence, inquiries had been initiated and, after due process, sanctions had been imposed. If there were indications that a crime had been committed, the case was transmitted to the prosecutor's office. The Minister provided relevant statistics.
14. The Minister stated that a special system for the registration of complaints alleging ill treatment by police officers had been introduced and was closely monitored. He added that a Police Officer's Code of Ethics had been adopted and that control over its implementation was exercised by the Commission on Human Rights and Police Ethics

within the Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore, special courses and educational programmes in the Police Academy were aimed at raising the awareness of legal officials regarding the need to confront violence and to improve standards and the human rights situation in prisons. Human rights awareness training had also been introduced for staff at detention centres, and civil society monitoring was used to increase the transparency of policy activity.

15. In relation to improving conditions in the penitentiary system, a special programme had been adopted in September 2010 to improve living conditions and tackle the issue of overpopulation. It was accompanied by an Action Plan for 2011–2013 specifying the relevant time frame, responsibilities, institutions and expected outcome.

16. With regard to the reform of the justice system, Government action was based on the Judicial Reform Strategy, and a special Council had been established to coordinate the implementation of the Strategy. The most recent amendment to the Constitution had provided for a permanent Supreme Judicial Council and limited magistrates' immunity. This was followed by a new Judicial System Act, which would be reviewed to strengthen the management capacity of the judiciary and to improve the overall discipline and effectiveness of the entire system. Other improvements mentioned included the adoption of an Administrative Procedure Code and functional administrative courts, the approval of a new Civil Procedure Code, the establishment of a Commercial Register and the introduction of private judicial enforcement. In addition, the meetings of the Supreme Judicial Council were now made public and its decisions had been posted online to strengthen the accountability of the system. Furthermore, a Magistrates Code of Ethics had been introduced, appointments were based on a competitive process, the principle of tenure for senior positions had been enshrined in legislation, and the appraisal process had been strengthened, so as to support training and qualification of the judicial system, implemented through the National Institute of Justice. The Minister also referred the continued development of a Unified Information System for Combating Crime.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

17. Algeria made reference to the establishment of various institutions mandated to promote human rights, such as the Ombudsman of the Republic and the State Agency for Child Protection. Algeria also referred to racist and hate-based acts against people belonging to minorities. Algeria asked for further information about measures taken to combat corruption. It made recommendations.

18. Morocco welcomed the increasing role assigned to the Ombudsman of the Republic and encouraged Bulgaria to share best practices relating to that institution, as well as information about its impact on the enjoyment of human rights. Morocco welcomed the various actions undertaken in favour of persons with disabilities in the areas of education, employment, health and accessibility, and asked for further information about the two-year Plan on Equal Opportunities. Morocco also requested further information about Roma integration, referring to actions relating to human rights education. Morocco made recommendations.

19. The Russian Federation noted the progress achieved in acceding to international human rights agreements and treaties, as well as the wide range of programmes adopted, including the National Strategies for Promoting Gender Equality, for Equal Opportunity for Disabled Persons and for Demographic Development. Concerning a number of pending issues and existing challenges facing Bulgaria, the Russian Federation asked about the results of the implementation of the 2003 Combating in Trafficking in Human Beings Act. It noted that Bulgaria's national institution intended to apply for accreditation as the appropriate institute operating under the Paris Principles.

20. France noted the adoption in 2010 of the two-year plan on equal opportunities for people with disabilities and of the Integration of People with Disabilities Act, but inquired what obstacles had prevented Bulgaria from ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. France inquired about the results of programmes aimed at increasing the standard of living and integrating the Roma people. France invited Bulgaria to amend its constitutional and legislative apparatus in order to better combat all forms of discrimination. France made a recommendation.

21. Indonesia commended Bulgaria for having incorporated the principles of international human rights treaties into its national legislation and welcomed its commitment to strengthening the democratic process and the rule of law. Indonesia, however, expressed concern about the child protection system, particularly in terms of access to health care, welfare and social assistance. As for human trafficking, Indonesia was encouraged to learn of Bulgaria's efforts to tackle the issue. Indonesia made recommendations.

22. Finland noted that children of the Roma minority lagged seriously behind in terms of education. Finland asked how Bulgaria would guarantee that Roma children, by age 16, would attain learning results comparable to those of the rest of the population, and thus improve the integration of Roma into Bulgarian society. Finland made recommendations, including with regard to equal access to public services and an adequate standard of living.

23. Belarus noted with satisfaction the efforts taken by Bulgaria to improve its national legislation and strengthen its institutional framework. Belarus welcomed the adoption of several long-term national strategies, including for children. Belarus commended the Government's policy in the area of primary education and the development of the health-care system. Belarus noted the measures taken by the Government to address more systematically and comprehensively the problems encountered in protecting the rights of and ensuring the integration of the Roma, including through the new 10-year framework programme. Belarus referred to the Government's purposeful efforts to combat trafficking. Belarus made recommendations.

24. Greece noted that, since the democratic change in 1989, Bulgaria had had a very good record in the Balkan region in the promotion and protection of human rights. Greece asked Bulgaria to share its best practices in developing a human rights institutional framework since the transition to democracy, and to share its experiences, including with respect to problems encountered in combating human trafficking. Greece expressed satisfaction that women's rights were a priority for Bulgaria. Greece made recommendations.

25. Belgium congratulated Bulgaria on the continuing progress made in human rights protection, but raised concerns relating to shelters for orphans and/or people with mental disabilities. Belgium also expressed concern at the fact that trafficking in women for sexual exploitation had persisted despite the existence of concrete measures to combat it. Belgium made recommendations.

26. Mexico noted Bulgaria's achievements in the areas of human rights protection and the consolidation of democracy. Mexico inquired about the implementation of recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination regarding the integration of Roma children into mixed schools, and whether there were mechanisms for coordination with civil society in that regard. Mexico asked for further information about measures to prevent discrimination against people with mental disabilities. Mexico made recommendations.

27. Malaysia recognized that Bulgaria had in place a comprehensive legal framework that incorporated regional and international norms and standards related to the promotion and protection of human rights. Malaysia also recognized that Bulgaria faced several

challenges, including incidences of human trafficking and issues concerning the human rights of the Roma community, particularly of Roma women and girls. Malaysia made recommendations.

28. Canada noted positive efforts to ensure the enjoyment by vulnerable groups of their human rights, as well the law on legal aid and the establishment of a national office on legal aid. Canada expressed concern at the reported excessive use of force by the police and the continuing challenges relating to gender equity. Canada made recommendations.

29. Cyprus welcomed Bulgaria's ratification of all relevant international conventions on combating human trafficking and the establishment of the National Commission to address trafficking. It also commended Bulgaria's efforts aimed at the integration of Roma communities and asked about the integration of immigrants and refugees. It requested information about measures taken to ensure that decisions of the European Court of Human Rights were taken into consideration in the formulation or implementation of national legislation and policies.

30. Germany requested information about how Bulgaria had followed up on recommendations by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Rights of the Child with reference to: combating the use of authority and ill treatment by the police against persons from minority groups; addressing concerns about the propagation of racist stereotypes and hatred towards persons belonging to minorities, including by organizations, media and political parties; and addressing concerns about the increase in the number of children subjected to child abuse. Germany made recommendations.

31. Netherlands commended Bulgaria for its efforts to strengthen the rule of law and to combat corruption and organized crime, as well as for its dedication to protecting the rights of children in institutions, notably through the adoption of the de-institutionalization strategy for children. Netherlands expressed concerns at the discrimination, and sometimes ill treatment, directed against Roma people. Netherlands made recommendations.

32. The delegation of Bulgaria responded that, in relation to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Bulgaria should be able to adhere to it once agreement had been reached within the European Union.

33. Concerning the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the Minister responded that the National Assembly should be able to ensure Bulgarian adherence to them by the end of this year.

34. In respect of human trafficking, Bulgaria responded that, as of last week, a massive national public awareness information campaign had been launched. While recognizing that there were difficulties in persuading witnesses to provide testimony, Bulgaria noted that this was slowly changing and there was a sustained increase in the number of trafficking victims identified and referred for protection. Such victims were also eligible for free medical and psychological care. There was a national telephone number for children who had been subjected to domestic violence, and quite often such cases were connected to cases of trafficking.

35. In relation to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto, the delegation responded that Bulgaria had signed both, in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Thus, the Government had demonstrated its political will to abide by their provisions. However, if Bulgaria was to be able to fully implement the Convention, a number of changes needed to be made in domestic legislation, including the Family Code,

and such changes were now in process. Once that process had been completed, Bulgaria would be able to proceed with ratification.

36. Regarding the situation of Roma children and school attendance rates, Bulgaria acknowledged that Roma children constituted a large proportion of the children dropping out of the education system. However, the number of leaving school prematurely had been declining. The Government had taken action to increase children's school completion rates, particularly in impoverished communities, where many were of Roma origin, by linking child benefits to school attendance. Furthermore, there had never been a policy of segregating children of different ethnic backgrounds in schools. Rather, there had been a decline in the quality of the teaching in schools whose students belonged to predominantly Roma or impoverished families. The Government would continue to address the quality of the education that children received throughout the education system.

37. Bulgaria reiterated that there was a comprehensive programme for the de-institutionalization of children, in view of the system inherited from the past. The aim was to improve training programmes aimed at improving services in existing institutions and community-based services, such as foster care, and to involve the extended families of institutionalized children in assuming responsibility for their care once they had left the institutions. Another system involved the establishment of a number of safe houses, where adolescents could stay before being reintegrated into society.

38. To the comment on the need to promote tolerance more actively through a public campaign, the delegation responded that Bulgaria was famous for being a country of tolerance, and that under law, all religious and ethnic communities fully enjoyed their right to engage in their cultural traditions and religious practices. The delegation reiterated the readiness of the Government to continue, by providing various services, in partnership with the non-governmental community, to be engaged in promoting tolerance more actively.

39. Denmark was pleased to note a momentum in Bulgaria's efforts to reform the justice system and asked what the main challenges were in the years to come. Denmark also highlighted the issue of the Roma minority and wished to know the extent to which members of that minority were treated as Bulgarian citizens in their own right. Denmark stated that it looked forward to Bulgaria's swift ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture. Denmark made recommendations.

40. Hungary welcomed the establishment of several national institutions in the field of human rights. Hungary supported Bulgaria's commitment to fighting corruption, which remained one of the major social problems, alongside human trafficking and discrimination. Hungary was concerned about the high number of cases involving violations against and among children, and stated that the protection of children should be one of the main priorities of every State. Hungary made recommendations.

41. Brazil commended Bulgaria for its cooperation with the human rights mechanisms, including its standing invitation to special procedures and the withdrawal of all its reservations to human rights treaties. Brazil noted that Bulgaria recognized the persistence of discrimination against, poverty among and the social exclusion of Roma. It noted with concern the increased rates of the sexual exploitation of children and child abuse. Brazil commended Bulgaria for recent achievements in the protection of refugees. Brazil made recommendations.

42. Stating that Bulgaria had been its traditional friend and an important European Union partner, Slovakia thanked Bulgaria for having referred to the topic of the Roma community and expressed its readiness to share the best practices and lessons learned within the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Slovakia commended Bulgaria's efforts to combat discrimination and asked Bulgaria what other measures it had envisaged in pursuit of that goal. Slovakia made recommendations.

43. Sweden asked Bulgaria to elaborate on efforts to ensure that detention conditions fully met international human rights standards and about further plans to address the situation in prisons. Sweden referred to the concerns of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, including with regard to the selective transfer of Roma children to special schools for children with developmental disabilities; the use of excessive force by law enforcement officials against the Roma; and poor knowledge and inadequate application by the judiciary bodies of standards for protection against racial discrimination. Sweden made recommendations.

44. Norway commended the inclusion of agreed international norms and principles in Bulgarian legislation. Norway stated that the political will for democratic reforms to ensure the proper functioning of the judicial system and to fight corruption and organized crime must produce real results, and indicated that it remained firmly committed to continuing to assist Bulgaria in the implementation of European standards. Norway made recommendations.

45. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, while welcoming the adoption of the Legal Aid Act, noted areas in which the administration of justice could be improved. It welcomed Government efforts to promote the integration of Roma; however, it expressed concern about the situation of Roma children and their access to services. Given reports of a high prevalence of domestic violence, the United Kingdom asked about the allocation of State resources to victim protection services and efforts to prevent domestic violence. It made recommendations.

46. Turkey commended Bulgaria for its achievements in the area of human rights protection. Turkey referred to the period 1984-1989, also known as the Revival Process, during which an assimilation campaign had been carried out against the Turkish minority, noting that complaints of victims had not yet been addressed. Turkey also stated that the Turkish minority continued to face impediments in exercising its religious freedoms and asked whether Bulgaria intended to amend the law on Religious Denominations. Turkey made recommendations.

47. Italy praised Bulgaria's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and took due note of its policies and strategies in favour of Roma people. As regards the concern expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination regarding cases of ill treatment and excessive use of force by the police against persons belonging to minority groups, Italy encouraged Bulgaria to continue to take measures to combat any such abuse. Italy made a recommendation.

48. The Republic of Moldova regarded as an important step the raising of the status of the Ombudsman to the constitutional level. It congratulated Bulgaria on having undertaken comprehensive initiatives and expressed the view that Roma communities should be duly empowered to share responsibility for the successful implementation of such initiatives. The Republic of Moldova welcomed developments in the fight against trafficking and asked Bulgaria to elaborate on the national framework in the field of gender equality and domestic violence and how it envisaged implementing the universal periodic review recommendations. It made a recommendation.

49. China expressed appreciation for the fact that Bulgaria had formulated the national strategy on promotion of gender equality 2009-2015 and that women participated in elections on a much larger scale. China also stated that Bulgaria had achieved remarkable results in promoting and protecting the rights of children, the disabled and ethnic minorities, among others. China asked what specific measures Bulgaria had taken and what challenges it still faced in addressing the ageing of the population. China made a recommendation.

50. The United States of America stated that the new Government's commitment to rooting out corruption was laudable, and encouraged it to institutionalize those reforms. It

remained concerned about harsh conditions in prisons and detention facilities and in State-run institutions for children, such as orphanages, reform boarding schools and facilities for children with mental disabilities. It was concerned about reports by some minority religious groups that they had been subjected to discrimination from local government officials, even after having obtained national registration through the courts, and about reports that Jehovah's Witnesses and Muslim communities had experienced difficulties in obtaining construction permits for new houses of worship. It made recommendations.

51. Bosnia and Herzegovina noted Bulgaria's significant progress in building its human rights legislative framework and praised the extension of a standing invitation to the special procedures. It welcomed the establishment of the National Commission to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. It inquired about Bulgaria's accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and legislation on the right to asylum and protection against discrimination. It made recommendations.

52. Serbia asked about the implementation of legislation on the right to education. It drew attention to legislation that appeared to reinforce stereotypical attitudes regarding the roles of men and women. Serbia asked for information about measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in the economy; efforts to assess and monitor the employment situation of ethnic minority groups; measures planned to implement the newly adopted Declaration on the situation of the Roma population; and efforts to prevent and combat trafficking. It made a recommendation.

53. Azerbaijan commended Bulgaria for its institutional reforms, including the establishment of the State Agency for Child Protection in 2000 and many others. It stated that in 2009, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had noted with satisfaction various measures taken and programmes implemented for the integration of persons belonging to minority groups. Azerbaijan made recommendations.

54. In respect of juvenile justice, the delegation of Bulgaria responded that relevant authorities were working on a new concept aimed at reform of the system.

55. Concerning the implementation of the National Strategy for Children, nine crisis centres had been established to look after children for up to six months if they were at risk of violence or any other crime, and 150 people had attended those centres in 2009. Bulgaria stated that there was a unified national telephone number for child molestation, and that a very large number of children had contacted authorities by calling that number.

56. With respect to prison conditions, Bulgaria acknowledged that conditions were not good and needed to be improved, and a new plan of action had been adopted by the Government to reform prisons. To date, conditions in five prisons had been improved, and one new prison was being built in Sofia.

57. Regarding religious affairs, the delegation responded that the Government did not believe that any country outside Bulgaria's borders had the right by implication to represent or to speak on behalf of any religious or ethnic communities in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. Existing disputes within some religious communities were addressed through the legal process, and the Government would be wrong if it were to interfere in that process, as some might have suggested. With respect to Jehovah's Witnesses, Bulgaria indicated that the Government had been thanked in writing by the European Association of the Christian Witnesses of Jehovah for having addressed their specific concerns.

58. With regard to the revival process of 1984–1989, Bulgaria responded that compensation had been paid in the past, pension rights had been restored to all affected, and a judicial investigation was underway to ensure that the instigators would be punished.

59. Armenia stated that Bulgaria's strong human rights machinery, complemented by its commitments such as the withdrawal of all reservations to the international human rights instruments and its membership in regional human rights bodies, seemed to be providing avenues for the protection and promotion of human rights. Armenia wished to know how decisions of the European Court of Human Rights were addressed and welcomed Bulgaria's policy of treating all national minorities in a manner consistent with its international obligations. Armenia made recommendations.

60. Spain commended Bulgaria for the establishment of an institutional and legislative framework for human rights protection and for the issuance of a standing invitation to special procedures. Spain recognized the improvements made in combating discrimination as well as achievements accomplished in the area of women's rights. Spain made recommendations.

61. Austria noted that the process of preparing the national report had included consultations with non-governmental organizations. Austria, while welcoming the adoption of the "Vision for De-institutionalization", was concerned that institutionalized care remained widely used and that the average stay of children in institutions continued to be extremely long and the quality of the care provided low. Austria was also concerned that the work of child protection departments remained seriously underfunded. Austria proposed related recommendations.

62. The Czech Republic expressed appreciation for steps taken by Bulgaria to combat stereotypes related to national and ethnic minorities, notably the rulings of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination in cases involving discriminatory statements by the media. Concerning the report of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee on the use of force by police officers against detainees, it expressed the hope that Bulgaria would fully investigate the allegations and bring to justice those responsible. The Czech Republic made recommendations.

63. Palestine noted the measures taken to promote and protect human rights, including protection from all forms of discrimination. Palestine referred to Bulgaria's pledges to achieve gender equality in the economic and social fields, in professional and family roles and in decision-making, as well as in terms of development and security. It also referred to efforts to combat gender-based violence, trafficking and stereotyping in society, and to promote children's rights in education and institutions. Palestine made a recommendation.

64. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia commended Bulgaria for its ratification of numerous international human rights instruments and their inclusion in its national legal system. However, it raised questions regarding the registration of OMO Ilinden PIRIN. The most recent unsuccessful attempt to register it had been in June 2009, despite the recommendations made by the Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, and all the legal arguments in favour of OMO Ilinden PIRIN. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia made recommendations.

65. Chile noted that protection against all forms of discrimination was a priority of Bulgaria and welcomed the establishment of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination, together with the Ombudsman and the National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Demographic Issues. Chile noted that Bulgaria recognized that the Roma continued to be in a situation of vulnerability and that the country was concerned about the need to implement consistent and specific policies for them. Chile made recommendations.

66. Argentina welcomed the fact that Bulgaria had extended a standing open invitation to special procedures. Argentina expressed appreciation for additional measures taken by Bulgaria to improve the situations that Roma and migrants had to face, and to end practices that may have resulted in discrimination. Argentina made recommendations.

67. Switzerland noted that Bulgaria had not yet ratified all human rights instruments, although the country had ratified the most important of these. It made reference to discriminatory practices against minorities, human trafficking and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment committed by law enforcement officials, notably against persons belonging to minority groups. Switzerland made recommendations.

68. Ghana commended Bulgaria for its efforts to fully integrate refugees into its society, while noting the challenges faced by the country in combating trafficking in human beings. Ghana wished to know what concrete steps Bulgaria intended to take to enhance its capacity to deal with the identification of victims and criminal proceedings for trafficking. With regard to equality, Ghana wished to know the status of the Equal Opportunities Bill, the adoption of which has been postponed since 2001. Ghana made recommendations.

69. Slovenia commended Bulgaria for its excellent treaty body reporting status, as well as its efforts to de-institutionalize child care. Slovenia asked Bulgaria for information about its implementation of the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child that it provide sufficient human resources, an adequate strategic approach and effective coordination with respect to the implementation of the Programme for the Equal Integration of Roma. Referring to the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Slovenia asked about the progress made in further developing structures and means for teaching ethnic communities in their mother tongue. Slovenia made recommendations.

70. Ukraine noted the efforts of Bulgarian national institutions in the areas of anti-discrimination, gender equality, child protection, combating trafficking in human beings and cooperation on ethnic and demographic issues. Ukraine praised the approval of the new Framework Programme for the Integration of Roma into Bulgarian Society for 2010-2020. Ukraine also welcomed Bulgaria's signature of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, and encouraged the country to ratify it as a matter of priority. Ukraine made recommendations.

71. Iraq referred to the developments in the area of promoting human rights since the arrival of democracy in Bulgaria, including the adoption of legislation and the establishment of institutions, especially the Ombudsman and councils dealing with gender issues and combating trafficking. Iraq noted Bulgaria's efforts aimed at the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and welcomed the country's extension of a standing invitation to the special procedures. It made recommendations.

72. Nigeria commended Bulgaria for its commitment to the protection of human rights and recognized its efforts to tackle, inter alia, child abuse, violence against women and corruption. Nigeria noted that Roma people were still virtually lagging behind in all basic indices of human development. Nigeria also noted that the legal framework for protecting ethnic minorities from discrimination was deficient. Nigeria made a recommendation.

73. Romania expressed confidence that the recently established institutional framework would play a successful role in the implementation of human rights in Bulgaria. Romania encouraged the authorities to continue their efforts with a view to improving results in challenging fields. Romania also commended Bulgaria for having involved civil society in the universal periodic review process and expressed the view that cooperation between the public authorities and non-governmental organizations was a guarantee for a transparent and meaningful review process. Romania asked what steps were envisaged by Bulgaria to ensure gender equality.

74. Concerning the empowerment of women in society in general, the delegation of Bulgaria responded that men and women had an equal right to participate in society, and that special provisions in the Protection against Discrimination Act provided for all legal entities, including private companies, to undertake positive measures to increase the

participation of that sex which was less represented in the work environment. At present, there was a 13 to 14 per cent gap in terms of what men and women were paid on average. The Government had examined why this difference existed. It seemed to be due to the structure of staffing and positions occupied, rather than to the existence of policies giving men and women different salaries. Furthermore, an agreement had been signed between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Commission on Protection against Discrimination to take joint action to reduce or eliminate differences in pay between men and women.

75. With respect to refugees and asylum seekers, Bulgaria responded that since 2002, there had been a separate law and a Government agency ensuring the full implementation of protection measures under international law. The Minister provided relevant statistics.

76. Regarding domestic violence, Bulgaria responded that since 2005, the Domestic Violence Act had provided a clear definition, specific actions and measures to protect victims, and that in 2009 the necessary amendments had been made to the Penal Code. The Ministry of the Interior had issued guidelines on how to take action to protect women and children in cases of domestic violence, information leaflets had been distributed, and a National Coordinator in the Ministry of the Interior had been appointed. In August 2009, a national 24-hour hotline had been set up so that all victims could receive information and legal or psychological support. Currently, there were three shelters and five crisis centres, managed on a partnership basis by municipalities, non-governmental organizations and Government agencies, and they were doing excellent work.

77. Concerning the implementation of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, Bulgaria responded that the Ministry of Justice was responsible for their application and the harmonization of national legislation. For that purpose, a special mechanism had been created within the Ministry for analysing and distributing the case law of the European Court among the members of the judiciary and formulating proposals for legislative amendments, if needed. In addition, there was nationwide training for judges of the courts of first instance to inform them of the decisions and practice of the European Court of Human Rights. The delegation also stated that there were increasing numbers of cases before the courts of first instance quoting the European Convention on Human Rights.

78. In relation to the decision of the European Court of Human Rights regarding the case of OMO Ilinden PIRIN, it was reiterated that Bulgaria was in full compliance with that judgement and that no obligation to automatically register any political entity arose from that decision. Any registration of political entities had to be carried out in accordance with the relevant national legislation. It was also stated that ethnic identification was a matter of personal choice. The Bulgarian Constitution provided for equal rights for all Bulgarian citizens, notwithstanding their religious or ethnic background.

79. In concluding, the delegation of Bulgaria thanked all participants for the questions asked and recommendations made, and stated that he would ask his team to look closely at the recommendations that could be taken on board.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations

80. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue and listed below will be examined by Bulgaria, which will provide responses in due course, but no later than the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council, to be held in March 2011:

80.1. Consider the possibility of expressing its consent to be bound by (Argentina)/ratify (Armenia, Spain, Palestine, Switzerland)/accede to the

Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to permit the enable an independent monitoring of prisons and detention centres by the Subcommittee (Czech Republic);

80.2. **Comply with recommendation No. 1737 of 17 March 2006 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which calls for the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Algeria); consider the possibility of expressing its consent to be bound by (Argentina)/ratify (Palestine)/accede to ICRMW (Bosnia and Herzegovina);**

80.3. **Adhere to the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with a view to its early ratification (Mexico); ratify CRPD (Spain); consider the possibility of expressing its consent to be bound by (Argentina)/consider ratifying CRPD and the Optional Protocol thereto (Chile), which would result in a higher level of cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, ensuring better safeguards for the rights of people with disabilities (Hungary);**

80.4. **Consider the possibility of expressing its consent to be bound by the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Argentina)/ratify CED (Spain) and accept the competence of the treaty body as provided for in articles 31 and 32 (France);**

80.5. **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Spain, Palestine, Switzerland);**

80.6. **Consider acceding to (Brazil)/accede to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Slovenia);**

80.7. **Adopt a law guaranteeing equal opportunities for women and men (Canada);**

80.8. **Adopt legislation to prevent discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the same manner as existing legislation to protect against discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, gender and religion (United Kingdom);**

80.9. **Study the possibility of introducing a criminal aggravating factor for racial and religious hatred or hatred against persons with a minority sexual orientation (Spain);**

80.10. **Adopt domestic legislation in accordance with the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the Optional Protocol thereto, guaranteeing efficient access to procedures for determining refugee status to persons requiring international protection (Argentina);**

80.11. **Consider establishing (Finland)/establish a national human rights institution accredited by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Algeria, Turkey) in order to raise public awareness and guide the authorities (Finland);**

80.12. **Establish an independent national human rights institution in accordance with (Indonesia)/in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Azerbaijan);**

- 80.13. Explore the possibility of consolidating existing Ombudsman institutions and mechanisms into a single national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, through accreditation by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (Malaysia);
- 80.14. Strengthen the role of bodies and institutions such as the Ombudsman and the National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Demographic Issues, in particular the Commission for Protection against Discrimination, by enhancing their human and logistical capacity (Ghana);
- 80.15. Establish urgently procedures/mechanisms at the central and local levels to ensure the health and safety of all children in institutions, including a child ombudsman at the national or regional level (Norway);
- 80.16. Continue efforts to further improve the already existing solid institutional framework regarding the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and share best practices in this field (Greece);
- 80.17. Further strengthen the role of bodies and institutions with competence to combat discrimination, in particular the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (Azerbaijan);
- 80.18. Continue and strengthen, when necessary, the implementation of policies and programmes focused on the inclusion of its Roma community (Slovakia);
- 80.19. Continue pursuing appropriate policies and programmes to accommodate the needs of mentally disabled children (Slovakia);
- 80.20. Adopt a national strategy to continue and intensify the de-institutionalization process aimed at replacing current shelters with alternative housing and means of care better suited to meeting the needs of orphans and/or persons with mental disabilities (Belgium);
- 80.21. Draw up concrete and effective strategies to fight against domestic violence (Switzerland);
- 80.22. Adopt and implement firmly all necessary measures to improve and ensure respect of the rights of people belonging to minorities (Switzerland);
- 80.23. Develop and assess its strategies to combat human trafficking (Switzerland);
- 80.24. Gather statistics on the various groups accessing public services in order to obtain an accurate picture of the use of services by different minorities (United Kingdom);
- 80.25. Ensure continued emphasis on children's rights and welfare in Bulgaria's budget policy and consider increasing budget allocations for the implementation of the CRC, including in the areas of health, education and family support (Malaysia);
- 80.26. Ensure necessary resources to facilitate the implementation of programs aimed at improving the situation of Roma people (Canada);
- 80.27. Establish training programmes addressed to staff members of shelters for orphans and persons with mental disabilities in order to enable them to respond at best to the specific needs of the residents (Belgium);
- 80.28. Develop and strengthen its human rights training programmes for police forces and the judiciary, addressing among others the appropriate use of

force as well as issues relating to discrimination and profiling based on race (Canada);

80.29. Pay special emphasis on informing members of especially the Roma community, the elderly, women and the disadvantaged of their constitutional rights as citizens (Finland);

80.30. Initiate public programmes to increase knowledge and awareness about sexually transferred diseases (STDs) and contraception (Germany);

80.31. Give positive consideration to the request to carry out a visit to the country by the Special Rapporteur on the question of the trafficking of persons (Belarus);

80.32. Continue to take the necessary measures in order to better promote women's rights in all spheres of society (Greece);

80.33. Continue to take concrete measures in accordance with obligations under the relevant international treaties to protect women's rights and raise their social status (China);

80.34. Consider further affirmative action to accelerate equality for women in practice: in working life and in political decision-making (Norway);

80.35. Continue developing policies for effective gender equality and to combat gender violence, conducting special monitoring of cases involving gender-based violence and studying the reasons why such cases are rarely reported to the authorities (Spain);

80.36. Take steps to address the gender segregation in the economy and the gender wage gap in the public sector (Ghana);

80.37. Strengthen the concept of equality between the sexes and non-discrimination, and open up possibilities for women to participate in public life and have access to high-level positions in leadership and administrative posts (Iraq);

80.38. Continue its efforts to overcome stereotypical attitudes regarding the roles of men and women and existing gender inequality (Ukraine);

80.39. Continue, as a main priority of the Bulgarian legislative and administrative policies, the fight against all forms of religious hatred, discrimination, racism, extremism and xenophobia (Algeria);

80.40. Redouble efforts for the effective implementation of criminal provisions relating to acts of ethnic discrimination so as to prevent discrimination and human rights violations committed against persons belonging to minority groups (Mexico);

80.41. Take more resolute action to prevent, and punish perpetrators, of racially motivated acts and propaganda that targeted ethnic minorities and foreigners (Malaysia);

80.42. Continue in its efforts to tackle manifestation of racism and xenophobia including a review of the respective law to ensure that full and equal rights are guaranteed to all (Czech Republic);

80.43. Support more actively the implementation of the rights of sexual minorities as a means to fight social isolation and discrimination (Norway);

- 80.44. **Develop effective measures to overcome continuing discriminatory patterns against ethnic minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons through education and training (Spain);**
- 80.45. **Continue strengthening the legal safeguards against ill treatment, and pursue efforts to reduce incidents of ill treatment by law enforcement personnel (Slovakia);**
- 80.46. **Step up its efforts aimed at strengthening its effective implementation of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Argentina);**
- 80.47. **Take all necessary measures to ensure that detention conditions fully meet international human rights standards, in accordance with Bulgaria's international obligations (Sweden);**
- 80.48. **Make further efforts for combating domestic violence, as the problem of domestic violence is still present (Bosnia and Herzegovina);**
- 80.49. **Take concrete measures aimed at effectively fighting against gender-based violence, including social awareness-raising campaigns and training programmes targeting law enforcement officials (Canada);**
- 80.50. **Put in place sound policies to ensure a safer environment for children, and implement a more effective system for addressing cases of violence against children (Indonesia);**
- 80.51. **Implement policies to prevent and detect cases of child abuse, as well as to ensure accountability and the rehabilitation of child victims (Brazil);**
- 80.52. **Further enhance measures to prevent the exploitation of children for the purposes of prostitution and pornography, as well as to prosecute persons who are guilty of the exploitation or ill treatment of children (Belarus);**
- 80.53. **Continue to ensure effective implementation of the national and transnational referral mechanism for victims of trafficking, and improve public awareness about the human trafficking issue (Indonesia);**
- 80.54. **Step up its effort to combat trafficking in persons, inter alia, through the development of international cooperation with interested Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (Belarus);**
- 80.55. **Strengthen its efforts relating to the fight against human trafficking, ensuring that all aspects of the issue, from prevention to the suppression of crimes and the protection of victims, are taken into consideration (Belgium);**
- 80.56. **Strengthen awareness-raising campaigns aimed at preventing human trafficking, and increase the protection provided to victims, notably children and newborns, including those of Roma origin, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Mexico);**
- 80.57. **Further develop preventive measures to combat trafficking in human beings, with a special emphasis on children, newborn and pregnant women, as well as strengthen the national referral system and increase the number of centres for victims of trafficking (Republic of Moldova);**
- 80.58. **Bring to justice the persons and social institutions for children responsible for 238 reported unaccounted deaths in the period 2000–2010 (Norway);**

- 80.59. Take concrete action to bring to justice those who committed human rights violations against the members of the Turkish minority in the period 1984–1989 before the natural extinction of both the victims and perpetrators of the said events (Turkey);
- 80.60. Take concrete measures to remedy the excessive use of force by security forces (Switzerland);
- 80.61. Continue its efforts to investigate, prosecute and convict trafficking offenders (Ukraine);
- 80.62. Continue its judicial reforms in the form of amendments to the Judicial Systems Act, the Penal Code and the Penal Procedure Code, the Ministry of Interior Act and the Criminal Assets Forfeiture Act and the like; give attention to more training and professionalism within the judiciary as well as the enhancement of the appraisal and appointment systems, and strengthen the accountability and efficiency of the Supreme Judicial Council (Netherlands);
- 80.63. Continue to focus political attention and commitment, as well as the necessary administrative resources in Bulgaria, on the crucial issue of promoting efficiency and consistency throughout the justice system, and not least the accountability of the judiciary (Denmark);
- 80.64. Enshrine in its Constitution the protection of rights of national and ethnic minorities, create an effective juvenile system, and continue to reform its justice system (Nigeria);
- 80.65. Promote awareness of the National Legal Office and its services to improve confidence in the justice system and to ensure that Bulgarians have adequate legal standing before the courts (United Kingdom);
- 80.66. Strictly apply all legal and disciplinary means to sanction corruption, conflict of interest and organized crime, and accelerate the implementation of the action plan to implement the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (Netherlands);
- 80.67. Create an effective juvenile justice system in order to defend children's rights (Hungary);
- 80.68. Take measures to guarantee effective access to justice, reparation and protection for women victims of gender-based violence (Brazil);
- 80.69. Increase the budget for prisons to add new bed space and staff, provide training for prison personnel and explore other types of detention for non-violent offenders to reduce the burden on prison facilities and staff (United States);
- 80.70. Set up a policy specifically aimed at reducing the number of Roma children placed without valid reasons in establishments for children with disabilities or in rehabilitation centres (Canada);
- 80.71. Rapidly close social institutions for children and find appropriate solutions for children who cannot live with their families (Norway);
- 80.72. Allocate sufficient and, if necessary, additional resources for the recruitment and training of personnel in children's institutions, and intensify efforts to raise the number of foster families and provide them with adequate training for foster care (Netherlands);

- 80.73. Increase the training and staffing levels of institutions for children, improve oversight, and implement incentives to attract higher-quality candidates to fill positions at these institutions (United States);
- 80.74. Undertake a comprehensive review of the child protection system, social assistance and family policies to ensure coordinated and efficient services (Austria);
- 80.75. Provide sufficient resources for the effective functioning of the child protection system, including through training of social workers, standards to limit the case load per social worker and their adequate remuneration (Austria);
- 80.76. Take steps to ensure the provision of appropriate support for parents and families at risk to prevent the abandonment of children (Austria);
- 80.77. Take urgent steps to end the continuing practice of placing babies and young children under the age of 3 in institutionalized care, and ensure the availability of family-based alternatives (Austria);
- 80.78. Strengthen efforts to implement the “Vision for De-institutionalization”, specifically in the light of the United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (Austria);
- 80.79. Introduce legislation prohibiting secrecy in adoption and guaranteeing the right of the child to know his or her origins (Austria);
- 80.80. Take steps to end the practice of international adoptions where the adoptive applicants are matched with children without having been introduced or had any opportunity to build any relationship with a child prior to the adoption decision (Austria);
- 80.81. Take necessary action to address the impediments faced by the Turkish minority in exercising its religious freedoms, including the prevention of choosing religious leaders and their discouragement from restoring the property of the foundations and refusal for construction of mosques in the cities (Turkey);
- 80.82. Take necessary measures to ensure that local authorities respect the religious freedom of minority religious groups and treat all religious groups equally (United States);
- 80.83. Work for more diversified ownership of the media, and thoroughly investigate cases of intimidation/harassment against journalists, in order to fully ensure freedom of the press (Norway);
- 80.84. Strengthen public awareness-raising campaigns relating to racism and intolerance, and adopt measures aimed at fighting racism in the media (Canada);
- 80.85. Guarantee, without any discrimination, the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and the right to participate in public and political life (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia);
- 80.86. Use more actively existing or new platforms for involving the Roma community in policy formulation and implementation at both the local and central levels, and actively pursue an increase in the number of Roma in all public institutions (Netherlands);

- 80.87. Consider adopting cash grant policies to alleviate poverty of vulnerable groups and to link it with health care, such as vaccination and prenatal care (Brazil);
- 80.88. Take further measures to combat poverty of elderly women, single mothers with children and women with disabilities (Norway);
- 80.89. Guarantee to all citizens, without exemptions, equal access to public services and to an adequate standard of living (Finland);
- 80.90. Identify a set of “universal social services” accessible to all children and families to provide an adequate standard of living (Austria);
- 80.91. Take effective measures to enhance the health-care sector (Algeria);
- 80.92. Persist in its national efforts aimed at the systematic inclusion of human rights education in its educational and vocational systems and at all school levels (Morocco);
- 80.93. Ensure that Roma children are not sent to special schools for the disabled, but instead are schooled together with other Bulgarian children (Finland);
- 80.94. Evaluate the need for tuition in a special school on the basis of the child’s personal characteristics, not on his or her ethnicity (Finland);
- 80.95. Avoid the practice of the school segregation of Roma children, for example with primary school teachers, who are speaking their mother tongue, with the objective of achieving an effective learning of the Bulgarian language and other subjects taught (Spain);
- 80.96. Communicate more efficiently to Roma parents the importance of literacy and the positive effect of education on the children’s future, and, in this task, use the help of school assistants with a Romani background (Finland);
- 80.97. Guarantee that the implementation of the law on compulsory pre-school education for all children, adopted by Parliament on 23 September, covers the Roma as well as other minorities (Finland);
- 80.98. Continue its efforts on the issue of inclusion of children with disabilities in the general school system and reducing the number of schools for children with special educational needs (Slovenia);
- 80.99. Step up all efforts to protect the rights of migrants and also foster their economic and cultural life and improve their standard of living, particularly for large families, and provide them with Government financial support (Iraq);
- 80.100. Take all necessary measures to fully ensure the enjoyment of human rights by persons belonging to the Romani minority, including with regard to combating discrimination and violence against such persons (Sweden);
- 80.101. Continue to improve the living conditions of Roma people (Italy);
- 80.102. Strengthen agreed efforts and the consolidation of existing acquis on the integration of Roma People, particularly relating to budget and coordination of the various programmes established by the authorities (Morocco);

- 80.103. Continue to give political attention, commitment and concrete action on the issue of combating any discriminatory practices against the Roma minority (Denmark);
- 80.104. Promote the economic and social integration of Roma individuals and respect for their rights by ensuring that due consideration is given in all policy-making processes to the impact on Roma of proposed legislation (United Kingdom);
- 80.105. Pursue its integration policy for the Roma population, guaranteeing access to basic health and social services, education, housing and employment (Spain);
- 80.106. Promote the identity of the Armenian minority by further addressing its educational, religious and cultural needs (Armenia);
- 80.107. Fully implement the obligations from the Framework Convention for National Minorities of the Council of Europe and allow the registration of OMO Ilinden PIRIN and allow fully enjoyment of all rights to the Macedonian minority and other minorities, by fulfilling cultural and other related rights (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia);
- 80.108. Fully respect all international obligations by accepting the legally binding United Nations documents and by its membership in the United Nations, especially articles 1, 3, 6 and 15 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and by respecting the decisions of the other United Nations bodies and other organizations at the national level, especially, the decisions of the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg, in regard to minority rights (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia);
- 80.109. Further address the human rights challenges and continue its efforts in strengthening national mechanisms, particularly in the field of gender equality and non-discrimination and in the area of preventing and combating human trafficking and protecting the victims thereof (Serbia);
- 80.110. Undertake a transparent and inclusive process with civil society in the implementation of universal periodic review recommendations (Norway);
- 80.111. Continue consultations with civil society in the follow-up to this review (Austria);
- 80.112. Translate, publish and make available to the citizens of the country the assessments and recommendations made by relevant international human rights bodies, including the Human Rights Council's universal periodic review (Norway);
- 80.113. Assess the recommendation made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child with regard to seeking technical assistance from the United Nations, in order to implement the recommendations of the study on violence against children and the establishment of a juvenile justice system (Chile).
81. All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the positions 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 Bulgaria was headed by His Excellency Nickolay Mladenov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, and was composed of the following members:

- His Excellency Gancho Ganev, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva;
- Ms. Nadia Shabani, Chairperson, State Agency for Child Protection;
- Mr. Emil Velinoff, Director, Religious and Denominations Directorate with the Council of Ministers;
- Ms. Ludmila Bojkova, Director, Human Rights Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Georgi Krastev, Deputy Chairperson, National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Demographic Questions;
- Ms. Iliana Malinova, Vice Executive Director, Agency for Social Assistance;
- Ms. Anna Andreeva, Director, Social Activities Directorate, State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers;
- Ms. Nina Nikolova, Director, Procedural Representation of the Republic of Bulgaria before the European Court of Human Rights, Ministry of Justice;
- Ms. Boyka Cherneva, Member of the Permanent Commission on Human Rights and Police Ethics, Ministry of the Interior;
- Ms. Tatyana Angelova, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva;
- Ms. Evelina Ananieva, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva;
- Ms. Kameliya Petrova, Attaché, Human Rights Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ms. Yuliya Ilcheva, Expert, European Issues and International Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.