

**Human Rights Council, 26th Session  
Item 6 Universal Periodic Review  
Adoption of the Outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Slovakia (20 June 2014)**

**Statement by H.E. Fedor Rosocha, Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva**

Mr President, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

I am very pleased to be here today to present the formal response of the Slovak Republic to the recommendations it received during the Universal Periodic Review in February.

I wish to thank all States for their questions, comments and recommendations made during the consideration of Slovakia in the review process early this year. My country particularly appreciates the prevailing spirit of openness and constructiveness during the interactive dialogue. We also express our appreciation to NGOs for their contributions to the review process. Their first-hand information regarding the human rights situation on the ground together with their invaluable expertise provides a real added value to the UPR.

Mr President,

Slovakia reiterates its firm commitment to the Universal Periodic Review.

The UPR has a unique role in the UN human rights architecture. Since its creation it has shown to be an effective tool to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights. Increased attention of both Governments and non-governmental actors to human rights and fundamental freedoms belongs, from our point of view, among the main achievements of the UPR. We believe that its potential should be further developed while maintaining focus on its main elements, in particular its universality and dialogue-based approach.

Slovakia emphasizes the need for the future smooth functioning of the UPR process. In order to keep the UPR credible and effective we fully subscribe to the voluntary commitments declared in joined statement on behalf of 47 states in March 2013.

During the interactive dialogue, Slovakia received 146 recommendations. They were all subject to thorough examination and analysis by relevant line ministries and other national authorities. Slovakia accepts 133 recommendations. Some of them are already in the process of their implementation or they are intended to be addressed by the existing or future strategies and programmes.

After a careful consideration Slovakia decided not to accept 7 recommendations and to accept partially 6 recommendations. With regard to the partially accepted recommendations, it should be noted that these are supported in principle. This means that the Slovak Government supports the idea and reasoning behind; it is not, however, in a position to accept them fully.

Slovakia recognizes the importance to improve the participation of Roma in public life. Due to our constitutional order we are, however, not in a position to accept the recommendation regarding the participation of Roma minority in the Parliament. The Parliament is constituted on civic principle. This means that the affiliation with national or ethnic minority can be declared only upon a free decision of an individual. In order to achieve better results in this area, Slovakia will support the involvement of Roma in civil society and in elected bodies through the existing programmes and strategies.

I would like to reiterate the firm commitment of the Slovak Government to fight against racism, extremism and other forms of intolerance. Slovakia notes the recommendation to prohibit by law and prevent activities of extremist organizations. We support this recommendation in principle.

In response to the recommendation to maintain the protection of the right to life from conception to natural death in accordance with Article 15 of the Constitution, we would like to point out to the finding of the Constitutional Court, in which the Court clearly rejected to interpret Article 15 of the Constitution in the way that it establishes an absolute right to life from conception. For this reason Slovakia accepts this recommendation without the wording "from conception".

Vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees enjoy special protection in Slovakia. We will pursue national policies to address their special needs.

Likewise Slovakia will continue to ensure full and effective protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.

Mr President,

I wish to reaffirm our commitment to cooperate with the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms. We see the UPR as an ongoing process which is not concluded with the adoption of the outcome report. Quite the contrary, to ensure the real impact of the UPR on national human rights policies, Slovakia considers important the continuity between the UPR cycles. In order to ensure it, we take a voluntary commitment to present an interim report on the progress made in implementing the UPR recommendations.

Finally, I would like to express our gratitude to the Troika – Ethiopia, Mexico and Saudi Arabia for facilitating the review and to the Secretariat for its valuable assistance during the whole process.

Thank you.