

UPR of Bosnia and Herzegovina

17 February 2010

Statement by Norway

Norway thanks the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) for the presentation of the national report.

Norway strongly believes that the active participation of civil society is essential to a meaningful UPR process. We recommend that BiH establish an effective and inclusive process to follow up on UPR recommendations.

Norway is concerned about the segregation policy in the school system, especially in the Federation of BiH where the model of “two schools under one roof” still exists. We recommend that BiH takes the necessary steps to resolve the problem of fragmentation of the education system, including strengthening of policy development and strategic planning, improving the access to inclusive and quality education, promoting child participation, taking measures to prevent discrimination and segregation of children and promoting tolerance and respect for diversity in the education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Norway strongly believes that human rights defenders play an important role in fostering a culture of human rights. Norway remains concerned about the continued efforts of the Government of Republika Srpska to try to control civil society. We recommend that the Government of RS effectively investigates and prosecutes violations against human rights defenders. We also recommend that the Government forcefully denounces attacks against human rights defenders and that State authorities give human rights defenders legitimacy and recognition through supportive statements. We recommend the Government to adopt appropriate measures to disseminate widely and ensure full observance of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

Norway commends the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality. Norway recommends that necessary steps be taken to harmonize other legislation with the Gender Law in order to ensure women access and participation in decision making bodies.

Norway appreciates that Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the Decade of Roma Inclusion, as well as the effort to address the integration and participation of Roma people in the society. We recommend that Bosnia and Herzegovina take concrete measures to ensure that the Law on Protection of National Minorities will be applied effectively, in order to overcome the social challenges facing the Roma people.

Norway is concerned about the lack of commitment of Bosnia and Herzegovina with regards to ensuring freedom of assembly and association for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. Norway recommends that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina expresses a strong commitment to protect and advocate the fundamental human rights of the LGBT communities as equal citizens, in keeping with the country’s commitments to international conventions