European Union

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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Item 6

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Statement by

H.E. Mr Raimonds Jansons

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Latvia

on behalf of the European Union

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Geneva, 26 June 2015

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia.

Mr. President,

The European Union extends its strong support for the UPR, a truly universal mechanism which has the potential to make a true difference on the ground and contribute to achieving full realisation of human rights for all. The principles of the UPR are applicable to all UN Member States without discrimination, and the universality of the process remains a salient feature of its success.

We are pleased to observe a positive mobilizing effect of the second cycle of the UPR on both governments and civil society. We welcome the practice of voluntary mid-term reports by many States as a contribution to a more transparent process and a continuous, regular and meaningful dialogue.

The power of the UPR is embedded in the effective implementation of the accepted recommendations. In bilateral relations with all countries, the EU and its Member States are committed to raising UPR recommendations which have been accepted, as well as recommendations of treaty monitoring bodies and UN Special Procedures. The EU Member States are equally determined to ensure implementation of such recommendations within their own frontiers. The EU pays close attention to the degree of implementation by all countries of UPR
commitments which they have accepted and will endeavour to provide support for their implementation.

We welcome the active role of independent National Human Rights Institutions with “A status” in the UPR process, in particular their statements immediately following the State under review. As up to 80 per cent of the UPR recommendations include the involvement of Parliaments, we look forward to further discussions and exchange of best practices on how the parliamentarians could be more engaged in the UPR at the national level.

Independent civil society effectively brings its contribution to the UPR by speaking out and documenting human rights violations. We underline the role of all stakeholders in the UPR process, and their active inputs in each phase of the UPR. We are seriously concerned by any reported incident of harassment, intimidation and reprisals towards civil society representatives and their organisations, and continue to defend NGOs’ legitimate participation.

Finally, we welcome the valuable support provided by the OHCHR in the area of technical assistance and capacity building. We wish to thank the Office for its tireless work to ensure the smooth organization of the UPR process, and will continue to count on the commitment and professionalism of the Office’s staff.