



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN GENEVA

43rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review Serbia – 10 May 2023

Statement by Ms. Michelle Baldacchino, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the UN in Geneva

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Mr. President,

Malta welcomes the delegation of Serbia to this session of the Universal Periodic Review.

We welcome Serbia's continued commitment to enhance human rights protections. These include the adoption of Constitutional amendments by Parliament and their subsequent confirmation by a referendum aiming to strengthen the independence of the judiciary. The new law on the Protector of Citizens of October 2021 is also an important development giving new powers to the national Ombudsman. Serbia's new general protocol for the protection of children from abuse and neglect; and the 2021 amendments to the Anti-discrimination Law providing wider protection against discrimination for LGBTIQ+ persons important developments.

Malta would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Consider developing a comprehensive strategy and action plan to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence against women, including by combating gender stereotypes.
2. Consider enhancing training programs for law-enforcement and judicial authorities to protect the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons in exercise of their fundamental freedoms, including the right to peaceful protest.
3. Consider legislative changes to align the legal definition of rape with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and implementing a full ban on child marriages.

We wish Serbia a successful UPR session.