

Statement by

**the Republic of Slovenia**

at the

**46th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Item 2: General Debate on High Commissioner's oral update**

Geneva, 25 February 2020

Excellencies,

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity:

2020 has been marked by the devastating pandemic, which has exposed systemic gaps in human rights protection that have undermined our resilience in fight against it. While the crisis is multifaceted, we would like to stress the gender and age aspect of it.

Globally, women are exposed to a greater risk of contracting the virus. We remain deeply worried also over the magnitude of reports of gender-based violence, including domestic violence. Hence, it is of paramount importance to mitigate these impacts by designing policies, which include a gender-sensitive response, and first and foremost include women and girls in their planning and adoption.

The hard reality of last year has also took its toll on the rights of older persons. It once again showed lack of their social protection, access to health services, autonomy and participation in decision-making, as well as their freedom from violence and discrimination. There is a need for a fundamental shift, including by adoption of a legal instrument to promote and protect their rights.

COVID-19 has not only exposed some of society’s most significant shortcomings, but has also provided a pathway. The imperative is to build a more sustainable, secure and prosperous future which can be achieved only with a human rights-based approach to recovery that puts people at the centre of all recovery efforts. I thank you.