

27

*Check against delivery*

13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Working Group of the UPR

UPR of the Philippines

**Statement by Austria**

Austria welcomes H.E. ... and the delegation of the Philippines to the UPR and thanks for the submission of the national report.

We commend the Government of the Philippines for having taken a series of positive steps since the last review. In particular commendable is the enactment of specific laws for the protection of human rights, such as the August 2009 Magna Carta for Women, as well as the introduction into its domestic laws of an Anti-Torture Act in 2009. Effective implementation of these laws will be of utmost importance. Could the Government elaborate on specific measures in this respect?

We also welcome the ratification of key international conventions by the Philippines, such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in April of this year, as well as the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2009.

Austria is, however, concerned about continuing reports of serious human rights violations, including torture, ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and harassment. Austria is in particular concerned about the continuing attacks on journalists and media workers and the ensuing problem of impunity which engenders a chilling effect on the up-to-now relatively free media landscape.

Austria would like to offer the following recommendations:

1. To effectively fight impunity for cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances committed by the armed forces and the police, as well as non-state actors.
2. To effectively investigate and prosecute attacks against journalists and to introduce into its domestic laws strong legislation prohibiting these practices and imposing criminal penalties.
3. To prevent cases of torture in facilities of detention through the provision of legal safeguards for detainees and effective investigations into allegations of torture and the prosecution and sentencing of perpetrators.
4. To ensure, in the context of the judicial reform, a gender sensitive and accessible judiciary, both in terms of procedure and attitude.
5. To issue a standing invitation to all United Nations Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups.

I thank you.