

UN Human Rights Council

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Review of the UNITED KINGDOM

24

Geneva, 24 May 2012

Statement by AUSTRIA

Thank you, Mme President.

Austria welcomes H.E. and the UK delegation to the UPR and thanks them for their presentation. We commend the Government for the open and active engagement with NGOs and civil society in the UPR process.

We note the recent changes introduced by the "Terrorism Prevention and Investigative Measures Act 2011" but remain concerned about the continued possibility of pre-charge detention of up to 14 days and about the continued admissibility of "secret evidence".

Could the Government explain in more detail how it is planning to uphold its obligations to guarantee a person's right to a fair trial in all terrorism-related cases?

Austria offers the following recommendations to the UK Government:

- Ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances;
- Ensure that all persons detained, also in terrorism-related cases, have access to legal counsel and are duly informed about the charges that are brought against them;
- Continue efforts to ensure that "secret evidence" is only used in cases where there is a serious and immediate threat to public security and ensure independent and effective judicial oversight;
- Investigate allegations that stop-and search orders disproportionately fall on persons belonging to ethnic, religious and other minorities and introduce adequate safeguards;
- Finally, take concrete steps to further reduce overcrowding of prisons, including through the increased application of alternative sentencing for juvenile offenders.