

14th Session of the UPR Working Group – Review of Czech Republic

Statement by Austria

22 October 2012

We warmly welcome H.E. ... and the delegation of the Czech Republic and thank them for the presentation and the national report.

Austria commends the numerous efforts undertaken since the last review, including the ratification of international instruments such as the Rome Statute or the CRPD and the adoption of various actions plans.

Although measures were taken to address discrimination in particular of the Roma community, Austria joins others in their concern over several racially motivated violent public demonstrations and marches in Northern Bohemia in 2011. We would be interested to know whether these acts of violence have been fully investigated and perpetrators have been held accountable.

Austria is equally concerned about reports of persisting segregation of Roma children in education, often overrepresented in so-called “practical” schools. In this context, we would like to remind the Czech Republic of its obligation to take effective steps to finally implement the European Court for Human Rights judgment “D.H. and Others vs. Czech Republic” and to increase the chances of success of Roma children in the mainstream education system.

Finally, we commend the Czech Republic for its efforts to effectively combat human trafficking, including by adopting a national strategy. Could you inform us on whether there is an evaluation mechanism foreseen and if you consider ratifying the Palermo Protocol and the CoE convention on this issue in the near future?

Austria offers the following recommendations:

- Further strengthen its policies and programmes aimed at combating discrimination and intolerance and ensure that incidents are subject to prompt and independent investigation and effective prosecution;
- Effectively eliminate segregation of Roma within the education system, inter alia by fully and swiftly implementing the National Action Plan for Inclusive Education aiming at addressing issues identified by the European Court for Human Rights;
- Sign and ratify the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Palermo Protocol;
- Ratify the Optional Protocol to the CRPD;

I thank you.