

14th Session of the UPR Working Group – Review of Guatemala

Statement by Austria

24 October 2012

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

Austria commends the Government for the measures taken in implementing the recommendations of the last review, including the ratification of the Rome Statute and the decision to extend the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). In addition, we also commend the Government for the exemplary cooperation with the OHCHR.

Austria however remains concerned about the ongoing threats and attacks against human rights defenders and journalists that often go unpunished. We would be interested to receive more information on the work done by the special unit established on this issue.

We are equally concerned about the high level of violence in the country, including gender-based violence, often enhanced by the uncontrolled carrying of arms and ammunition by individuals, including such working for private security companies. In this context, we would be grateful for information on whether you are envisaging a review of your Action Plan on violence against women.

Following Austria's recommendations during the last review, could the Government also elaborate on whether legislation has been changed to prohibit corporal punishment in the home and family?

Austria offers the following recommendations:

- Ensure the effective implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and improve the protection of human rights defenders;
- Ensure a safe working environment for journalists and continue to take proactive measures against impunity;
- Enhance the legal protection for women, including by improving the investigation, prosecution and prevention of violence against women and fully implementing the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Eradication of Domestic Violence and Violence against Women;
- Thoroughly implement legislation and develop procedures involving civil society to ensure the protection of indigenous people, especially in the context of land disputes and forced evictions;

I thank you.