

UN Human Rights Council**14th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review****Review of SRI LANKA****Statement of AUSTRIA**

Austria welcomes H.E. ... and the delegation of Sri Lanka to the 2nd cycle of the UPR and thanks them for the submission of the national report.

We acknowledge the adoption of the *National Plan of Action for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights* as well as the *Government of Sri Lanka's Action Plan on the LLRC recommendations* as important steps forward and would be interested to know more about monitoring and reporting mechanisms, including result indicators, for the two action plans.

At Sri Lanka's first review, Austria made recommendations on measures regarding the protection of witnesses and victims of human rights violations, as well as on the protection of IDPs. These recommendations were accepted by the Government. Could you provide specific timelines for their full implementation?

We welcome the significant steps taken so far to facilitate the resettlement of IDPs, and would encourage the Government to continue their assistance for returnees. At the same time, we are concerned about reports on security forces still occupying parts of the land belonging to IDPs. Could you respond to allegations with regard to limitations of freedom of assembly and expression as well as to reports of rape and sexual assault by members of the security forces on Tamil women and girls in the country's north?

Austria would like to offer the following recommendations to the Government:

- To ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC as well as OP-CAT and establish a National Torture Prevention Mechanism;
- To fully implement the recommendations of the LLRC, in particular steps to ensure independent and effective investigations into all allegations of serious human rights violations, in the context of Sri Lanka's civil war and its aftermath, in order to allow for full national reconciliation;
- To adopt a National Policy on the protection of human rights defenders and journalists in order to prevent harassment and intimidation and to ensure effective investigate of such acts and prosecution of perpetrators.

I thank you.