

**15<sup>th</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group – Review of Serbia****Statement by Austria**

30 January 2013

We warmly welcome H.E. ... and the delegation of Serbia 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 CRPD and the adoption of various laws and actions plans, including the general anti-discrimination law. Austria views it as crucial to make progress regarding the integration of Roma citizens through the social and educational systems of the State. While welcoming recent efforts with regard to facilitating registration in the birth registry, we would like to encourage Serbia to make further progress by inter alia allowing people to register using a provisional address.

Although Serbia has adopted a range of measures, including national action plans in order to address corporal punishment of children and domestic violence, these issues still remain a concern in your country. Could you therefore elaborate more on your plans with a view to enhancing support for victims of domestic violence and to prohibiting corporal punishment of children by law?

Austria is concerned by the frequent attempts by extremist groups to intimidate journalists, human right defenders and LGBT activists through hate speech and physical violence, which often is not adequately persecuted or sanctioned. In this context, we also regret the ban of the 2011 and 2012 Belgrade Pride Parade as a consequence to violent attacks by hooligans during the 2010 Parade. Could you inform us on your plans to ensure the right of freedom of expression and association as well as on your steps to ensure adequate protection of the LGBT community in your country?

Finally, we would be grateful for any information with regard to a possible ratification of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and measures to ensure the safety of journalists in your country.

Austria offers the following recommendations:

- Enhance measures regarding the integration of Roma citizens through the social and educational systems of the State, i.a. by facilitating registration in the birth registry allowing register using a provisional address;
- Effectively combat domestic violence and establish shelters and support centers with medical, psychological and legal support;
- Prohibit by law the corporal punishment of children, including in the family;
- Respond effectively to discrimination and violence against LGBT persons and ensure their safety during public events such as the Belgrade Pride Parade.

I thank you.