

**UN Human Rights Council**

**17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of the Central African Republic**

Geneva, 25 October 2013

**Statement by AUSTRIA**

*Check against delivery*

Austria welcomes H.E. ... and his delegation and thanks them for their national report and their presentation.

Austria is deeply concerned about human rights violations and abuses as well as the deteriorated humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic. We note with regret that even gross and systematic human rights violations are hardly ever the subject of investigations let alone prosecution and recall that all perpetrators must be brought to justice. We are alarmed about the continued use of children by local self-defense militias and the Séléka.

Austria appreciates the government's willingness to engage with the international community to address the multiple human rights challenges and take necessary steps to improve the situation. We welcome in this regard the good cooperation of the Central African Republic in the appointment of an Independent Expert by the Council.

We would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Provide the National Commission of Inquiry with the necessary resources to promptly, thoroughly, and independently investigate allegations of gross human rights abuses by all parties,
2. Undertake a screening of all security forces under international guidance in order to exclude perpetrators of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law from the national security and defense forces,
3. Ensure the immediate release of all children associated with armed forces or groups by issuing clear orders, including at local level,
4. Strengthen inter-religious dialogue and take measures to promote reconciliation among concerned groups.

I thank you Mr. President.