

**20th Session of the UPR Working Group –
Review of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Statement by Austria**

31 October 2014

Mr. President,

Austria warmly welcomes H.E. ... and the delegation of Iran to the UPR and thanks for the submission of their national report.

Austria welcomes that the Islamic Republic of Iran protects certain religious and political rights of recognized religious minorities. In this context, we commend President Rohani's statement that "all ethnicities, all religions, even religious minorities, must feel justice." We look to the Government to swiftly put this commitment into practice and to take measures to ensure equality for all religious groups in Iran, in particular also the Baha'i, Sufi, Kurds and Sunni Arabs.

Iranian law outlaws torture and ensures that officials who engage in such practice are brought to justice. However, reports of torture, ill-treatment and deaths in custody remain without investigation and perpetrators are not brought to account. Austria is also deeply worried by the increasing number of executions in Iran, and the many juvenile offenders that reportedly remain on death row.

Austria encourages swifter and substantive progress towards better human rights protection in Iran, including in the above-mentioned areas, and would like to make the following recommendations:

1. End discrimination in law and practice against all religious and ethnic minorities and ensure full protection of their rights, including the right to free expression, association, assembly, religion and education;
2. Establish an official moratorium on executions, in particular public executions and executions of juvenile offenders who were under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged crime, with a view to reviewing all cases of juvenile prisoners on death row;
3. Ratify the Convention Against Torture as soon as possible;
4. Ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and girls, in particular in education and on the labour market.

I thank you.