

United Nations Human Rights Council**22nd Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review****Review of Bulgaria****Geneva, 7 May 2015****Statement by AUSTRIA**

Austria warmly welcomes H.E. and the delegation of Bulgaria to the UPR and thanks for the submission and presentation of the national report. We welcome the involvement of civil society in the preparatory process of this UPR and encourage the Government to continue its cooperation with civil society organizations in the follow-up to this review.

With regard to the reform of the juvenile justice system we commend Bulgaria for the adoption of the Concept for Public Policy of Justice for Children as well as the road map for its implementation. We regret however the delay in reforming the system and thus recommend that Bulgaria consider the implementation of the reform of the juvenile justice system as a matter of priority.

We share the concern of several treaty bodies about the high prevalence of domestic violence in Bulgaria and note with regret the low number of cases of domestic violence that had been brought to justice. Austria therefore recommends that Bulgaria increase its efforts to prevent domestic violence, particularly violence against women and ensure that sufficient State-funded shelters are available to women victims of domestic violence and their children.

A number of treaty bodies have also raised serious concern about discrimination against the Roma population, especially in access to education, employment, health and housing. We therefore recommend to take further steps to assure meaningful implementation and adequate funding for efforts to promote Roma integration, especially in the field of education.

Finally, with a view to the situation of unaccompanied migrant children, we share the concern of UNHCR that unaccompanied migrant children are often not appointed legal guardians and hence offer the recommendation to provide all unaccompanied children with appropriate legal guardians, as required by Bulgarian law, to ensure their basic needs are met and their best interests protected.

I thank you.