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**22nd Session of the UPR Working Group
Review of Mongolia**

Geneva, 5 May 2015

Statement by AUSTRIA

Austria warmly welcomes H.E. ... and the delegation of the Republic of Mongolia and thanks them for their presentation and the national report.

We commend Mongolia for its efforts in supporting freedom of expression, including by currently hosting the Freedom Online Coalition Conference. Its active civil society and pluralistic media landscape are of vital importance and a backbone for future development efforts. Mongolia also faces a challenging geopolitical location.

However, we are concerned by the effects of the Unified System of Website Comments and defamation court cases brought against bloggers and journalists.

We have further noted that the draft Criminal Law which includes the abolition of the death penalty has been pending in Parliament, and we hope it will be passed swiftly.

Concerns also remain regarding overall detention conditions and the prevention and investigation of allegations of torture and ill-treatment in custody.

While some progress has been achieved in reducing maternal mortality, more efforts are needed to combat violence against women and discrimination in political representation.

Austria would therefore like to make the following recommendations:

- to ensure that criminal defamation law is not used to silence critics, and to protect journalists' sources and whistleblowers;
- to establish an independent mechanism for the investigation of allegations of torture and ill-treatment in line with the requirements of the recently ratified OPCAT;
- to remove barriers in accessing legal remedies against domestic violence, including by improving the collaboration between relevant institutions and revisiting evidentiary requirements, and to ensure that restraining orders are enforced.

I thank you.