

United Nations Human Rights Council

24th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review

Review of Paraguay

Geneva, 20 January 2016

Statement by AUSTRIA

Austria welcomes the delegation of Paraguay to the UPR and commends the government for its efforts undertaken to implement the recommendations received during its first review.

We particularly commend Paraguay for the adoption of Act No. 4614 in 2012 which brought the definition of torture and enforced disappearance into line with international standards as well as for the establishment of the National Prevention Mechanism for the prevention of torture in accordance with the OPCAT.

We do, however, express our continued concern regarding a number of pressing human rights issues in the country including the high number of journalists, human rights defenders and lawyers - particularly working in defense of indigenous communities - assaulted, attacked or killed; the high rates of child pregnancy and maternal mortality many of which affected girls between the ages of 10 and 14 as a result of sexual abuse and violence.

Austria therefore offers the following recommendations:

- To combat impunity, prosecute perpetrators and ensure victims' access to effective remedies in cases of journalists, human rights defenders and lawyers who become victims of human rights violations and abuses;
- To prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly sexual abuse and domestic violence, including by adopting a law to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women;
- To repeal legislation criminalizing women and girls for having an abortion, as well as healthcare providers performing such services, and take measures to allow legal and safe abortions at least in cases of rape or incest, in cases where the life or health of the mother is at risk, or where the foetus is diagnosed with grave health deficiencies;

I thank you