**46th session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of Eritrea**

6 May 2024

**Statement by Austria**

Austria welcomes the delegation of Eritrea and thanks them for their presentation.

We welcome Eritrea´s efforts to improve access to and quality of education for vulnerable groups and those living in remote areas.

Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the lack of progress in ensuring a free civic space and the rule of law.

Austria would like to offer the following recommendations:

1. Engage constructively with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea as well as other human rights mechanisms and organizations and grant them unhindered access.
2. Step up efforts to eradicate the practice of female genital mutilation and cutting and effectively criminalize and prosecute all forms of violence against women.
3. Abolish the compulsory indefinite national service and ensure that the rights of those serving in the programme are protected.
4. Stop the arrest or arbitrary detention of Eritreans for their real or perceived opposition to the government and immediately and unconditionally release all those unlawfully and arbitrarily detained.

Thank you.