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

**Review of Slovakia**

6 May 2024

**Statement by Austria**

Thank you, Mr. President,

We warmly welcome the delegation of Slovakia to the UPR and thank them for their presentation. Austria commends Slovakia for the numerous efforts undertaken since the last review and for its strong commitment to ensuring the rights and safety of those fleeing the armed conflict in Ukraine.

The Roma minority continues to be marginalised in society. Despite court decisions and legal clarifications, the segregation of Roma in the education system remains a reality.

Journalists continue to be subject to lawsuits and to serious verbal insults, including by officials. The situation has further deteriorated in recent months. It is of utmost importance to protect journalists against all forms of intimidation, including by thoroughly persecuting hate speech on the internet.

Austria offers the following recommendations:

1. Reinforce efforts to implement court decisions against the segregation of Roma in education.
2. Fulfil existing obligations and strengthen legislation to ensure media freedom, freedom of expression, and the protection of journalists against all forms of intimidation and verbal assaults.
3. Strengthen efforts to protect children in vulnerable settings, such as reformatories.
4. Consider introducing a legal framework on the rights and obligations of same-sex couples.
5. Ensure safe and fair conditions for the work of human rights defenders and civil society organisations, including systematic and sustainable institutional and financial support.

I thank you.