**United Nations Human Rights Council**

**28th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review**

**3rd Cycle Review of Ghana, 7 November 2017**

**Statement by Austria**

Austria, welcomes H.E. Minister Gloria Afua Akuffo and the delegation of Ghana to the UPR and thanks them for the presentation of their informative report.

We thank Ghana for accepting all of Austria’s recommendations during the second cycle of the UPR in 2012 and the efforts undertaken by the government of Ghana to implement these recommendations. We are pleased to note that over the past few years, Ghana has continued to make progress in the field of protecting human rights. In this regard, we particularly welcome the ratification of the OPCAT.

At the same time we have noticed that different sources including reports from civil society are recommending measures to improve the rights of women and children as well as the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups. Moreover, Austria is concerned about reports of excessive use of force and unlawful killings by law enforcement and security personnel. In addition, Ghanaian courts are continuing to hand down death sentences and conditions in detention facilities have remained inadequate.

Austria would like to offer the following recommendations to the government of Ghana:

* Fully implement the Domestic Violence Act.
* Abolish legislation discriminating against women in the fields of property ownership, access to credit and inheritance.
* Revise the criminal code so as to eliminate mandatory death sentence and pursue efforts to abolish the death penalty.
* Establish an independent mechanism to carry out investigations of alleged misconduct by police officers.

I thank you.