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**38th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of BELGIUM**

5 May 2021

**Statement by Austria**

Thank you,

Austria welcomes the delegation of Belgium to the UPR and thanks them for their report and presentation today.

We commend Belgium for the consultations with civil society in the preparation towards the UPR and the elaboration of the national report.

We note the efforts of Belgium since its last review to combat violence against women, prevent discrimination, abuse, ill-treatment and excessive use of force by the police services as well as initiatives aimed at improving detention conditions and reducing overcrowding.

Austria offers the following recommendations to achieve further progress in these areas:

1. *Continue efforts to reduce prison overcrowding and to ensure that detention conditions are in line with international norms and standards;*
2. *Improve the systematic collection and analysis of data on violence against women and ensure low-threshold access of victims to justice and specialized support centers;*
3. *Continue to eliminate persistent barriers to the full respect of human rights standards within the police, including through enhanced transparency on misconduct by police services.*

I thank you.