**41st session of the Universal Periodic Review
Review of Bahrain**

7 November 2022

**Statement by Austria**

Austria welcomes H.E. Mr. Abdullatif Rashed Alzayani and the delegation of Bahrain to the UPR and thanks for the submission of their national report.

Austria commends Bahrain for its dedication to the UPR process and its efforts to improve the human rights situation in the country, including the creation of numerous entities dedicated to safeguarding human rights such as the Special Investigations Unit and the Ombudsman institutions at the Interior Ministry and the National Security Agency. We also acknowledge the additional measures Bahrain has taken since its last review.

Austria acknowledges Bahrain’s track record of working effectively with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, including through the Universal Periodic Review process and providing regular reports to UN treaty bodies.

[Austria commends Bahrain’s progress in respecting and safeguarding Human Rights and] Austria hopes that Bahrain will be committed to further advancing its progress in respecting and safeguarding human rights as outlined in its ambitious National Human Rights Plan for 2022-26.

Austria, however, would like to express concern at the maintenance of the death penalty, the prosecution of human rights defenders including the practice of withdrawing their citizenship, especially in cases where this leads to statelessness.

Furthermore, we believe that the independence and impartiality of many of the new entities created to safeguard basic human rights needs further to be enhanced, especially when it comes to counter cases of alleged torture and arbitrary detention.

Therefore, we would like to make the following recommendations:

1. To declare an official moratorium on executions with a view to the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and the abolishment of the death penalty.
2. To speedily and effectively implement the ten voluntary commitments made in its National Human Rights Plan for 2022-26.
3. To ensure that perpetrators identified in the course of fully impartial and effective investigations into torture and ill-treatment are prosecuted.

I thank you.