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

**Review of Tunisia**

8 November 2022

**Statement by Austria**

We commend the Tunisian Government for its efforts and steps taken in the implementation and recommendations received during the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review, such as through the adoption of the organic law No. 50 on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination as well as legal provisions to combat violence against women.

However, Austria remains concerned about the country's situation with regard to freedom of expression and protection of human rights defenders. Criminal cases continue to be documented against bloggers and activists, while vague legal provisions to pursue online criticism of authorities and state officials are being exploited. Moreover, journalists are being prosecuted before military courts.

Another area of concern to Austria is that since the third Universal Periodic Review, no progress has been made regarding recommendations to adopt an asylum law and establish clear mechanisms for the protection of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

We offer the following recommendations:

* Ensure that the rights granted under Decree-law 2011-88 are retained to protect civic space.
* Refrain from using article 91 from the code of military justice to prosecute journalists before the military courts.
* Adopt a more inclusive national migration strategy for migrant populations, including the adoption of asylum law.

I thank you.