**United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**

**29th Session – Review of ISRAEL**

**Geneva, 23 January 2018**

**Statement by AUSTRIA**

Mr. President,

Austria welcomes the delegation of Israel to the UPR and thanks them for the presentation of their national report which reflects the progress achieved on a number of human rights issues since its last UPR.

Referring to Austria’s unequivocal opposition to the death penalty in all times and in all circumstances, we have noted with concern the recent preliminary approval of the Death Penalty Bill by the Knesset.

Austria notes that the Committee against Torture has called upon Israel to “*speed up the process aimed at incorporating a specific offence of torture into domestic law*”. [Could the delegation provide us with an update on efforts in this regard? Bearing in mind our previous recommendations, **we recommend fully translating the CAT into national legislation and implementing the Committee’s recommendations**.

Regarding reports by OHCHR and others on Israel’s practice of administrative detention, Austria underlines that any detention of children must only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. **We recommend that Israel limits the practice of administrative detention and that the detention of and judicial proceedings against children fully respect international juvenile justice standards, and in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

While we appreciate the measures outlined by Israel in its national report, we note that challenges remain in the promotion and protection of human rights of persons belonging to minorities and **we recommend that Israel enhance its efforts to counter discrimination of persons belonging to Arab, Bedouin, Druze and Circassian communities as well as persons belonging to other religious and ethnic minorities.**

Taking into account the existing impediments to the freedom of movement affecting in particular the full enjoyment of access to health, education and broader economic and social rights, Austria **recommends to the Government to consult on possibilities to broaden access to a safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank.**

I thank you.