**United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review**

**30th Session – Review of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Geneva, 14 May 2018**

**Statement by AUSTRIA**

We would like to thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for the report and their presentation today. We welcome a number of positive steps taken since the last review, but remain worried about negative developments aggravating the human rights situation in Russia. Austria regrets that Russia decided to withdraw its signature of the Rome Statute of the ICC. We remain also concerned about the situation of LGBTI people in Chechnya.

We were pleased that Russia accepted Austria’s recommendation during the last UPR to intensify cooperation with the Council of Europe, in particular the Venice Commission, in properly implementing freedom of association and assembly. However, we note that serious concerns have been raised in relevant multilateral fora about recent legislation resulting in undue restrictions of freedom of association and assembly. Austria has also followed the reports about mass arrests during recent protest actions with particular concern.

Lastly, we welcome that Russia accepted Austria’s recommendation during the last UPR to intensify efforts to investigate cases of violence and intimidation against journalists and ensure that perpetrators are held to account. In this regard, we note the important role of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in assisting with the development of media pluralism.

**Therefore, we would like to make the following recommendations to Russia:**

* Take measures to review and revise existing legislation to be in line with international human rights obligations and foster an enabling environment for civil society.
* Ensure that all investigations into cases of abductions, unlawful detentions, torture and other ill-treatment, as well as killings are conducted thoroughly and effectively.
* Continue its efforts to strengthen the proper functioning of the judicial system and to ensure the right to a fair trial.
* Continue its efforts to protect journalists from violence and intimidation and to intensify cooperation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

I thank you.