**15 May 2019**

**33rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of Qatar**

**Statement by AUSTRIA**

We welcome the delegation of Qatar and thank them for their national report and presentation.

Austria commends Qatar for the important progress made over the last years, especially when it comes to the rights of migrant workers. We look forward that the government will take action on its announcement on subsuming domestic workers under the labour law.

Further steps are needed to create, in law and in practice, an enabling environment for civil society in accordance with the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly enshrined in the ICCPR.

We take positive note of increased attention to gender equality and women’s empowerment over the last years. However, women continue to face discrimination in marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance and lack effective legal protection against domestic violence and marital rape.

We recommend:

* Withdraw reservations to ICCPR, ICESCR[[1]](#footnote-1) and CEDAW, which Austria considers being incompatible with the object and purpose of the respective Covenants.
* Criminalize domestic violence, and ensure that the definition includes all persons living in the same residence, thereby protecting domestic workers.
* Amend Law No. 12 of 2004 and the Labour Law to respect the right of migrant workers to freedom of association, including the right to form or join trade unions, in line with the ICCPR and ILO Convention No. 87.
* Review the 1979 Press and Publications Law and the Penal Code, as well as reform defamation legislation, including the 2014 Cybercrime Prevention Law and Law No. 18 of 2004, in order to bring them in conformity with Article 19 of the ICCPR.

1. [Reservations to Article 3 and Article 8 ICESCR and reservations to Articles 7, 18.2, 22, 23.2 and 23.4 ICCPR] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)