**34th Session of the UPR Working Group –**

**Review of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**Statement by Austria**

8. November 2019

Mr. President,

Austria warmly welcomes the delegation of Iran to the UPR and thanks for the submission of their national report.

While acknowledging positive developments such as the reform of the nationality law and the high rate of women completing tertiary education, we remain among others concerned about restrictions to women’s fundamental freedoms and rights.

We welcome that Iran protects certain rights of recognized religious minorities. However, we are concerned about discriminatory laws and practices based on religious belief or ethnicity, in particular those targeting the Baha’i, Sufi, Kurds, Sunni Arabs and Christians, including converts.

We commend the significant decline in the number of executions since 2018, notably a result of the reform of Anti-Narcotics Law and the efforts of state-supported NGOs. However, we remain alarmed by the widespread use of arbitrary arrests and detention and reports of torture, ill-treatment and deaths in custody, which remain without investigation and accountability for perpetrators.

We remain concerned about dual nationals in detention and urge Iran to find a humanitarian solution to these cases.

**We recommend:**

* **End discrimination in law and practice against all religious and ethnic minorities and ensure full protection of their rights, including the right to free expression, association, assembly, religion and education;**
* **Ensure that prison conditions comply with the Nelson Mandela Rules, in particular by providing adequate health care.**
* **Ensure that the death penalty is never imposed in violation of Art. 6 ICCPR and** **consider** **establishing an official moratorium on executions** **of juvenile offenders who were under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged crime;**
* **Release women human rights defenders imprisoned for exercising their fundamental rights;**
* **Initiate steps towards the ratification of CAT and CEDAW.**

I thank you.