**34th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Review of BOLIVIA**

5 November 2019

**Statement by Austria**

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

Austria commends the numerous efforts undertaken since the last review, including the establishment of a Truth Commission, the development of an important regulatory and institutional framework for the protection of women’s rights and the ratification of the Escazú agreement. However, we remain concerned about the high levels of gender-based violence.

We acknowledge the efforts to improve the justice system and conditions of detention; however, the justice reforms do not seem to have led to significant improvements regarding the judicial backlog, lack of independence and corruption.

We are also concerned that Bolivian development policies often lead to the overexploitation of natural resources, damage of delicate ecosystems and the failure to ensure territorial and environmental rights of local communities.

We are concerned by various reports on irregularities that presumably occurred in the electoral process and hope that the OAS’ audit will contribute to the clarification of the current situation. We reiterate the expectation that the authorities resolve the situation in a manner that respects the people's will, the credibility of the electoral process and that preserves social stability.

 We recommend:

* In the spirit of the Escazú agreement, adopt measures on access to information, public participation and justice in environmental matters;
* Strengthen the Truth Commission to enable it to deliver prompt results and bring perpetrators to justice in fair trials;
* Ensure the independence of the judiciary and allocate sufficient resources for it to function effectively and expeditiously;
* Continue efforts to effectively implement the regulatory and institutional framework for the protection of women’s rights.

I thank you.