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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports: Austria

UN Human Rights Council
47th session
21 June – 13 July 2021

Madame President,

Amnesty International welcomes Austria's engagement with the UPR and its support of 236 out of 317 recommendations. While we welcome Austria's clarification of its position on certain recommendations,¹ we note with regret that some of these positions will effectively hinder the implementation of the relevant recommendations, such as those concerning the development of a National Human Rights Action Plan.²

Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about Austria's continued reluctance to ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, as this significantly weakens the right to an effective remedy.³ In this respect, Amnesty International further recalls that a ratification should not be conditioned on a committee's jurisprudence.

Madame President,

Amnesty International welcomes Austria's support of the recommendations to reform the Austrian Ombudsman Board,⁴ as an important step towards strengthening its national human rights framework. For that purpose, we recommend an open and transparent discussion involving civil society organizations and international experts on steps towards full compliance with the

¹ Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Austria: Addendum, A/HRC/47/12/Add.1, 7 May 2021, <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/47/12/Add.1>

² Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Austria, A/HRC/47/12, 9 April 2021, recommendations 140.9 (Georgia), 140.10 (Kazakhstan); 140.11 (Lithuania), 140.12 (Mongolia), 140.13 (Norway), 140.14 (Qatar), 140.15 (Republic of Korea), <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/47/12>

³ A/HRC/47/12, recommendations 141.15 (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), 141.16 (Honduras), 141.17 (Italy), 141.18 (Albania), 141.19 (Finland), 141.20 (Gabon) (France), 141.21 (El Salvador), 140.1 (Czechia), 140.2 (Gabon), 140.3 (Germany), 140.4 (Italy), 140.5 (Tunisia), 140.6 (Liechtenstein), 140.7 (Slovakia)

⁴ A/HRC/47/12, recommendations 139.8 (Canada), 139.9 (Egypt), 139.10 (Albania), 139.11 (Georgia), 139.12 (India), 139.13 (Algeria), 139.14 (Iraq), 139.15 (Kazakhstan), 139.16 (Australia), 139.17 (Senegal), 139.18 (Nepal), 139.19 (Republic of Moldova), 139.20 (Somalia),

Paris Principles.

We further strongly encourage the Government of Austria to urgently implement the recommendations concerning the establishment of an independent investigation and complaints mechanism to address allegations of torture and other forms of ill-treatment by the police.⁵ In this respect, the Government should ensure the effective participation of civil society in the reform process to ensure this mechanism complies with international standards and enjoys the full support and trust of the general public.

Madam President,

When this statement was recorded, 15 femicides had been reported in Austria since the beginning of 2021.⁶ We therefore call on the Government to urgently implement relevant recommendations to address gender-based and sexual violence.⁷

Finally, we welcome Austria's commitment to follow up on the recommendations it has accepted during this third cycle as well as its voluntary pledge to submit a mid-term report in 2023. We therefore encourage the Government of Austria to follow through these commitments and to establish a transparent and effective follow-up process that actively engages with civil society.

Thank you.

⁵ A/HRC/47/12, recommendations 139.65 (Bahamas), 139.69 (Canada), 139.70 (Denmark), 139.71 (Ghana), 139.72 (Islamic Republic of Iran), 139.73 (Australia), 139.74 (Russian Federation)

⁶ Autonome Österreichische Frauenhäuser, Frauenmorde durch (Ex-)Partner oder Familienmitglieder oder durch Personen mit Naheverhältnis zum Opfer 2021 laut Medienberichten, available at https://www.aofef.at/images/04a_zahlen-und-daten/Frauenmorde_2021_Liste-AOEF.pdf

⁷ A/HRC/47/12, recommendations 139.158 (Sweden), 139.159 (Canada), 139.161 (Togo), 139.162 (Lithuania), 139.163 (Belgium)