



## WORKING SESSION 8:

My name is Gözde Taskaya and I am here as a representative for Netzwerk Muslimische Zivilgesellschaft.

First of all, we are glad that Austria is one of those countries, which is collecting official data on hate crimes. But still police officers are often not willing to report hate crimes and incidents or they don't treat these cases properly. This shows that many police officers are not trained sufficiently on the matter.

We had a case where someone threw beer on a Muslim woman, another one where people pulled down the headgear of a Muslim woman. But both of these cases, as many others, were not reported because officials argued that this was not seen as a physical injury in order to be further investigated.

So if a woman still wants to fight against this kind of racism, she is totally left on her own to bring this case to civil court. But people don't have the financial resources to do so. And because of this, they lose trust in the state and its administrative bodies.

But it's very important and for this, I recommend and ask my country to adopt these points I mentioned as hate-crimes into the Austrian penal code, because these cases occur more and more often and we definitely need to prevent this. This is the best way my state can build trusting relationships to its Muslim citizens again, as well as to all other minorities struggling with racism. Because these hate-motivated attacks must be reported officially.

Furthermore, I want to mention the article 33 of the Austrian Penal Code where it is written, that if there are racist or hate-motivated attacks this must get sanctioned harder. But after some researches with some other Austrian NGO's, which are also collecting data and offering victim support, we found out that in the last 20 to 30 years this law was rarely applied. But this is a very important step Austria should take because we can clearly see a rise of the far-right, which goes hand in hand with anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, Xenophobia and all other kind of discrimination towards minorities like refugees. So we call out and recommend Austria to highlight and execute this law more often than it was done before.