

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 31st Session

Universal Periodic Review of Congo

Statement by Australia

Australia thanks the delegation for their report.

Australia acknowledges and supports the progress made by Republic of Congo to fulfil the recommendations made in its 2013 Universal Periodic Review.

We note that Congo accepted Australia's 2013 recommendation to abolish the death penalty and commend Congo's 2015 referendum abolishing the death penalty. **Australia recommends that Congo amend its Criminal Code to align it with the Constitutional abolition of the death penalty, and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.**

Australia acknowledges the significant steps taken by Congo to end the conflict in the Pool region, including agreement to a ceasefire, which has enabled over 100,000 displaced persons to return to their homes. **Australia recommends that Congo take action to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of human rights abuses during the conflict with a view to ensuring full accountability.**

Australia notes violence against women and human trafficking, particularly of women and girls, remain significant challenges. **Australia recommends that Congo repeal laws that criminalise adultery and enact comprehensive legislation making domestic violence and all forms of human trafficking illegal**

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