**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 31st Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Nigeria**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia welcomes Nigeria’s formation of the Presidential Investigative Panel and the army-led Special Board of Inquiry as important steps towards ensuring accountability of the Nigerian armed forces and law enforcement officials. **Australia** **recommends Nigeria commit to releasing the findings from the Presidential Investigative Panel and the army-led Special Board of Inquiry and to holding perpetrators to account.**

**We also recommend that Nigeria ensure all operations by the military and security forces comply with international law and Nigeria’s human rights obligations.**

Australia is gravely concerned by the high number of death sentences imposed in Nigeria. In 2017, Nigeria imposed the highest number of death sentences in sub-Saharan Africa. **Australia recommends that Nigeria establish a formal moratorium on the death penalty, as a step towards complete abolition of this practice.**

Australia is also deeply concerned by reports that Nigerian police and security forces have arrested journalists, threatened NGOs and used live ammunition against protestors. **Australia** **recommends Nigeria protect the rights to freedom of association, expression and peaceful assembly for all Nigerians, regardless of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.**

**Words: 178**