

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 32<sup>nd</sup> Session

Universal Periodic Review of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Statement by Australia

We thank the delegation of Afghanistan for its report.

Australia is encouraged by the possibility of peace talks in Afghanistan. **Australia recommends that Afghanistan ensure that constitutional human rights protections are a key component and objective of any peace negotiations.**

Australia remains concerned by continuing high numbers of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. **Australia recommends continued implementation of the National Policy on Civilian Casualty Mitigation and Prevention.**

We acknowledge progress made by Afghanistan in strengthening women's rights. **Australia recommends Afghanistan ensure the meaningful participation of women in peace negotiations.** Further, **Australia recommends Afghanistan fully implement and enforce its Elimination of Violence Against Women Law and its National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.**

Australia commends the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) for being re-accredited with Paris Principles 'A'-status. **Australia recommends Afghanistan take continued steps to strengthen the AIHRC's capacity, including by ensuring its fiscal sustainability.**

Finally, **Australia recommends Afghanistan reinstate its moratorium on executions, remove the death penalty from all criminal laws, and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.**