

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 33rd Session

Universal Periodic Review of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Statement by Australia

7 May 2019

Thank you [President/Vice President]

The 2018 national elections present an opportunity for the renewal of democratic discourse in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Challenges remain, however, in respect of the rights of women and girls, child labour and illicit weapons flows.

Australia recommends that the DRC:

1. Lift media restrictions implemented over the electoral period, and bring to justice those responsible for threats against journalists, the political opposition and human rights defenders.
2. Institute a legal framework that criminalises and punishes domestic violence and marital rape, trains officials in responding to such crimes, and extends services to survivors.
3. Take steps to eliminate child labour, including in illegal mines, and establish structures to support affected children.
4. Address the accumulation and illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons through improved stockpile management, effective prosecution of unauthorised sellers and distributors, and progression of legislative controls.
5. Formally abolish the death penalty.

153 Words