

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 35th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Lesotho

Statement by Australia

22 January 2020

Thank you, President

Australia acknowledges the progress Lesotho has made on human rights, including work towards establishing an independent national human rights institution, and encourages continued reform. Significant human rights issues continue to impact the people of Lesotho, including gender-based violations and abuses, and allegations of torture and degrading treatment by members of the security forces.

With these concerns in mind, Australia recommends that **Lesotho**:

1. Conduct independent and impartial investigations into claims that police and security forces have committed human rights violations, including torture and unlawful killings and, if substantiated, initiate prosecutions.
2. Abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.
3. Expedite the establishment of an independent national human rights institution, in accordance with the Paris Principles.
4. Repeal provisions in the Penal Code that criminalise same-sex relations between consenting adults, and amend relevant legislation to ensure discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is explicitly prohibited.

[156 words]