**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 13th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Morocco**

**Statement by Australia**

**22 May 2012**

Australia congratulates Morocco on the inclusion of strong language on human rights in its new Constitution. We commend Morocco for the explicit prohibition of torture and other cruel or degrading treatment, the commitment to fight all forms of discrimination, the recognition of Berber as an official language, and the recognition of the primacy of duly ratified international conventions over domestic law. We encourage Morocco to ensure that these laudable provisions are formally codified in domestic law.

We welcome Morocco’s commitment to reforming its criminal justice system with the aim of strengthening rights and freedoms and guaranteeing fair trials in accordance with international human rights standards.

We welcome Morocco’s withdrawal of its reservations to articles 9(2) and 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and encourage Morocco to withdraw its remaining reservations.

**Australia recommends Morocco accedes to the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.**

**We further recommend continuing reform of the criminal justice system, including ensuring that all detainees are either charged with recognizable criminal offences and tried in accordance with international standards for fair trial, or immediately released.**