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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 13th Session

Universal Periodic Review of the United Kingdom

Statement by Australia

24 May 2012

We acknowledge the United Kingdom's strong commitment to protection and promotion of human rights and commend the UK for its efforts to give practical effect to the Responsibility to Protect.

Australia commends the work the UK has undertaken since the last UPR including the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

We recommend the UK implement the EU Directive on trafficking in human beings by April 2013 and sign the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.

We welcome the UK's efforts, as Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, to reform the European Court of Human Rights to enable it to respond quickly to applications it receives and to ensure State parties observe their obligations under the ECHR.

Australia also welcomes the establishment of a Commission in March 2012 to investigate the creation of a UK Bill of Rights.

We welcome the establishment of the Scottish Human Rights Commission in 2008 – in addition to the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission) – to better promote and protect human rights in Scotland.

Australia recommends that legislation be introduced at the earliest opportunity to give the Children's Commissioner for England an explicit role of promoting and protecting children's rights in line with the CRC and to make the Commissioner more independent from Government and more accountable to Parliament.