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# AUSTRALIA



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## Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 14th Session

### Universal Periodic Review of Benin

#### Statement by Australia

The Government of Australia commends Benin for its accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Although we recognise that Benin has observed a moratorium on executions since 1987, its decision to accede to the Protocol is an important step towards formal abolition. In this regard, **we recommend Benin implement the Protocol into domestic law as soon as practicable.**

Australia remains concerned about the situation in Beninese prisons, including reports of overcrowding, police brutality, and detainment without expedient trial. We appreciate that, in many cases, Benin has sound legislation against these practices, and encourage the Government to strengthen efforts to ensure that such legislation is properly implemented and enforced.

Australia welcomed the relatively peaceful Presidential elections in 2011, and encourages the Government of Benin to support peaceful engagement in the political process, including through opposition groups and the media. Nevertheless, Australia notes with concern the suspension of Radio France International during the election campaign. **We recommend Benin take necessary steps to entrench, in practice as well as in legislation, freedom of expression, and freedom of the media.**

