



# AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 15th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Burundi

Statement by Australia

The Government of Australia commends Burundi's engagement in the Universal Periodic Review process and its progress since the last review in 2008, including establishment of the National Independent Human Rights Commission (CNIDH) and improvements to the Criminal Code.

Australia welcomes reports that the number of political killings has decreased in the last year. However, we remain concerned about continuing reports of torture and extrajudicial executions, including by intelligence and security services. **Australia recommends that Burundi conduct prompt and full investigations into extrajudicial executions and political killings and ensure that those allegedly responsible are prosecuted and afforded a fair trial free of political interference.**

**Australia recommends that Burundi extend invitations and provide access to UN Special Procedures mandate-holders, including the Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers and the Special Rapporteur on the Use of Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in order to help Burundi identify and address human rights challenges.**

**Australia also recommends that Burundi implement the recommendations of the Committee Against Torture in its 2006 Concluding Observations for Burundi, and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.**

Australia welcomes Burundi's efforts to address overcrowding in prisons and detention centres. **We recommend that Burundi take further steps to ensure the conditions of detention centres and prisons meet domestic and international standards, and implement measures to reduce prolonged pre-trial detention of detainees.**

Australia acknowledges the important part played by civil society, journalists and opposition parties in Burundi, including their role in enlarging the space for democratic debate and governance. **We recommend that Burundi strengthen and improve press freedom and freedom of speech, including in its consideration of draft laws currently before the National Assembly, including the revised press law and law on public gatherings.**