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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 17th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Israel

Statement by Australia

We thank the Israeli delegation for its presentation today and the government of Israel for its re-engagement with the Human Rights Council and the UPR process.

Australia commends Israel for the reduction in use of administrative detention and the release in August of 26 Palestinian detainees as a gesture of goodwill ahead of re-launching peace negotiations. Australia welcomes the Supreme Court’s 2009 ruling against the use of psychological pressure on detainees.

Australia welcomes Israel’s commitment, following its last UPR presentation, to fully protect the rights of minorities. **We recommend Israel continue efforts to ensure equal access of Bedouin communities to education, work, housing and public health.**

Australia welcomes Israel’s decision in September to increase work permits for West Bank Palestinians from 5,000 to 50,000.

We remain concerned at restrictions on freedom of movement in the Palestinian territories, and **we recommend steps are taken to ensure the rights to health, education, and other rights dependent on freedom of movement, are protected.**

Australia notes Israel’s concerns about being singled out in Item 7 of the Human Rights Council agenda on the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.