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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 18th Session

Universal Periodic Review of New Zealand

Statement by Australia

27 January 2014

Australia commends the Government of New Zealand’s strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. Australia welcomes New Zealand’s advances in implementing recommendations made at the 2009 Universal Periodic Review session, including the ratification of the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography on 20 September 2011, and working to promote a whole-of-government approach to address family violence through the Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families Programme of Action 2012/13.

Australia acknowledges New Zealand’s 2012 White Paper for Vulnerable Children, Children’s Action Plan and investment in national and community-based initiatives to address child poverty. **We recommend that the New Zealand Government continues its efforts to protect the rights of the child and reduce child poverty and violence.**

We commend the New Zealand Government’s commitment to support the UN Women’s Initiative, ‘COMMIT’, to address violence against women and girls. **Australia recommends that New Zealand continues to develop government-sponsored initiatives which focus solely on ending domestic violence and sexual and gender-based violence, particularly through implementing the recommendations of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence and the National Sexual Violence Prevention Plan.** We welcome the New Zealand Government’s aim to increase the participation of women in governance to 45 per cent in the public sector and over ten per cent in the private sector by 2014. **We recommend New Zealand implements effective measures to achieve this aim.**

Australia supports New Zealand’s Constitutional Review to consider the place of the Treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand’s constitutional arrangements, and welcomes the development of a new human rights action plan, in consultation with stakeholders. **Australia recommends that New Zealand continue to address inequalities affecting human rights in the areas of health, education, employment and income that disproportionately affect Maori and other minority groups.**

Speaker: HE Mr Peter Woolcott.