

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 18th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Vietnam

Statement by Australia

28 January 2014

Australia welcomes the progress Vietnam has made in advancing human rights since its first review, in particular its accession to the Convention Against Torture.

Australia also commends Vietnam for its commitment to human rights dialogues, including with Australia.

Australia remains very concerned about freedom of expression in Vietnam, particularly the focus in recent years on restrictions to views expressed on the Internet, including in social media. **Australia recommends space be given to non-state media and that Criminal Code Articles 79, 88 and 258 be made more specific and consistent with international human rights obligations on freedom of expression.**

Australia also remains concerned about restrictions on freedom of assembly and association in Vietnam. **Australia recommends that Vietnam enact laws to provide for and regulate freedom of assembly and peaceful demonstration in line with the ICCPR.**

Australia acknowledges the steps Vietnam has taken to reduce the number of crimes which incur the death penalty. **Australia recommends that Vietnam establish a moratorium on executions with a view to removing the death penalty from its criminal statutes and ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.**