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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 19th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Nicaragua

Statement by Australia

Australia welcomes steps taken by Nicaragua to address high levels of violence against women and girls, including through the Comprehensive Law against Violence against Women. Australia is concerned that amendments to Law 779, which allow judges to recommend women mediate with their attackers in place of prosecution, facilitate impunity for perpetrators and weaken protections for victims of violence. **Australia recommends Nicaragua repeal amendments to Law 779 and urgently address the high levels of violence against women and girls.**

Australia is concerned that women and girls are unable to access comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services. **Australia recommends Nicaragua provide universal access to safe and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and examine the link between gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive rights.**

Australia is deeply concerned about reports of abuse committed by police officers, including rape and torture. Australia also remains concerned that in cases of violence against protesters, police fail to intervene. **Australia recommends Nicaragua protect the rights of freedom of expression and assembly and ensure all abuses allegedly committed by police are transparently investigated.**

Finally, **Australia recommends that Nicaragua accede to the Rome Statute.**