

Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 20th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Statement by Australia

Australia welcomes the progress on human rights made by Bosnia and Herzegovina since its last Universal Periodic Review Process. Australia welcomes Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress on combatting systematic abuse by security forces. Australia also notes the success of the general elections held on 12 October 2014, which were deemed to be free and fair according to international observers.

Australia remains concerned that clauses in Bosnia and Herzegovina's constitution restrict the national tri-partite presidency and House of the People to the three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats). These clauses prevent the full political participation by all citizens. **Australia recommends that Bosnia and Herzegovina make the necessary constitutional changes to end discrimination against minorities in exercising their right to full political participation.**

Australia remains concerned that the justice system in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains vulnerable to undue influence. Australia also remains concerned that the justice system lacks sufficient capacity to implement the national war crimes strategy, particularly for war crimes of sexual violence. **Australia recommends that Bosnia and Herzegovina provide additional and sustained political and financial support to the justice system, including the Prosecutors' Office.**

Australia notes recent reports of threats and intimidation against journalists and the media. **Australia recommends that Bosnia and Herzegovina take immediate steps to ensure that allegations of threats and intimidation against journalists and the media are fully investigated.**