



Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 20th Session

Universal Periodic Review of the Gambia

Statement by Australia

Australia welcomes the delegation from the Gambia and appreciates its engagement in the UPR process.

Australia welcomes the Gambia's efforts to eradicate gender-based violence through enactment of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Acts in December 2013 and looks forward to the rigorous enforcement of this legislation. Australia notes with concern that the Acts do not prohibit female genital mutilation. **We recommend the Gambia take all necessary measures to prohibit and eliminate the practice of female genital mutilation.**

Australia is concerned that discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains widespread. **Australia recommends that the Gambia repeal all provisions of law criminalising same sex relations between consenting adults and ensure the rights of these persons are protected.**

Australia remains concerned by restrictions on media freedom through intimidation and the criminalisation of press-related offences. **Australia recommends that the Gambia amend legislation infringing on freedom of expression and decriminalise press-related offences such as defamation.**

Australia is concerned by reports of torture in custody and arbitrary detention. **Australia recommends that the Gambia ratify the Convention Against Torture and ensure that allegations of ill-treatment are investigated thoroughly and independently and that the individuals responsible are held to account.**

Australia recommends that the Gambia establish a formal moratorium on the death penalty with a view to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.