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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 21st Session

Universal Periodic Review of Kyrgyzstan

Statement by Australia

Australia welcomes the commitment of the Kyrgyz people to live in a free and democratic society, and the progress made towards stabilising the political situation and enhancing economic development since 2010. Australia congratulates Kyrgyzstan on peaceful parliamentary and presidential elections in 2010 and 2011. We note with concern, however, reports of abuses in relation to the continued ethnic tensions in the South. **Australia recommends Kyrgyzstan ensure due process and accountability in the administration of justice, and hold perpetrators of any ill-treatment of prisoners to account.**

Kyrgyzstan's constitution and laws prohibit discrimination and provide for freedom of expression, including religious freedom. Australia calls on Kyrgyzstan to ensure that these laws are implemented effectively, to ensure the protection of non-government organisations. **Australia recommends that any changes in legislation uphold fundamental freedoms and ensure non-discrimination, including on the basis of religion or sexual orientation.**

Australia commends Kyrgyzstan for increasing penalties for bride kidnapping in 2012 but notes further work is needed to implement laws on the protection of women. **Australia recommends that Kyrgyzstan take steps to ensure that laws on gender equality and domestic violence are enforced effectively.**

Speaker: Ms Lauren Stasinowsky