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**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 23rd Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Austria**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia recognises the sound human rights record of Austria, consistent with its position as an EU Member State and active proponent of human rights in the multilateral sphere.

We commend the institutional changes introduced by the Austrian Government since its last review, including enhancements to the mandate of the Austrian Ombudsman Board (AOB). As a like-minded democratic country committed to the rule of law, individual liberties and a free press, Australia looks forward to Austria's adoption of a National Action Plan for Integration to strengthen cooperation across the country in such areas as intercultural dialogue, education and employment.

Australia welcomes Austria's efforts to address racism and xenophobia, particularly with regard to excessive use of force, discrimination and ill-treatment of ethnic minorities by police forces. **Australia recommends Austria continue to provide greater human rights and anti-discrimination training to law enforcement personnel, and include measures to address racism in the National Action Plan for Integration.**

In light of Austria's ageing population, we welcome the government's efforts to combat violence against senior citizens and improve conditions of retirement and nursing homes. **Australia recommends Austria continue to enhance senior citizens' workforce participation, as advocated under the Federal Plan for Senior Citizens, adopted in 2012.**