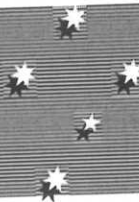




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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 24th Session

Universal Periodic Review of Niger

Statement by Australia

Australia commends Niger on its efforts to prohibit the inhuman treatment and punishment of its citizens in law. However, we are concerned by reports of a practice of torturing and ill-treating detainees accused of terrorist activities. **Australia recommends Niger includes a definition of torture in the Penal Code. We further recommend that Niger opens impartial and independent investigations into claims of torture and ill-treatment and bring perpetrators to justice.**

While we note the de facto moratorium on the death penalty in Niger and welcome steps taken towards acceding to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, we are concerned that the death penalty remains in the Nigerien Penal Code. **Australia recommends Niger removes the death penalty from its Penal Code with a view to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.**

Australia is concerned by continuing reports of violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation, sexual violence and forced and early marriage. **Australia recommends Niger strengthen efforts to protect women and girls from all forms of violence and implement a strategy to eliminate negative cultural practices that are harmful to and discriminate against women.**

Australia remains concerned that slavery persists in Niger. **We recommend Niger take concerted action to eradicate slavery including by enforcing the anti-slavery law and ensuring prosecution of perpetrators; taking measures to prevent slavery, protect and rehabilitate victims; and raising awareness of the criminalisation of slavery.**