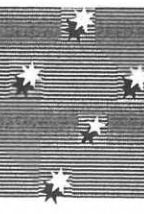




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Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 24th Session
Universal Periodic Review of Paraguay
Statement by Australia

Australia appreciates the engagement of the Paraguayan Government in the Universal Periodic Review process. Australia acknowledges Paraguay's reforms to democratic, legal and judicial processes since the last Periodic Review in 2011.

While Paraguay's Constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination, legislation is needed to guarantee this protection including on the basis of gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status. **Australia recommends that Paraguay accords priority to passing draft anti-discrimination legislation, tabled in Congress in November 2015, and reviews existing laws to ensure consistency with the draft legislation's objectives.**

Australia welcomes Paraguay's efforts to improve the land rights of indigenous communities, but notes further measures are required to ensure access and title to land, and to protect land reform advocates from intimidation and violence. **Australia recommends that Paraguay addresses extant indigenous land claims, and ensures an end to discrimination against rural and indigenous communities. Australia also recommends that Paraguay investigates and prosecutes allegations of abusive practices by security and law enforcement forces targeted at indigenous people.**

Australia is concerned at failures by law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence. Australia is also concerned that Paraguay's anti-abortion laws make provision for lengthy prison sentences for women who have abortions and health professionals who perform the medical procedure. **Australia recommends Paraguay increases resources to address gender-based violence. Australia further recommends Paraguay reform its punitive anti-abortion laws.**