**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 25th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Suriname**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia welcomes the engagement of Suriname in the Universal Periodic Review process.

Australia commends Suriname for formally abolishing the death penalty in its penal code in April 2015, and notes that this decision followed commitments made at its 2011 UPR. We regret that Suriname is yet to amend its military penal code accordingly, but note advice that this part of the Military Penal Code is obsolete and will soon be abolished. **Australia recommends Suriname ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.**

Australia remains concerned about the unresolved trial of President Bouterse, and 22 co-defendants, for the 1982 extrajudicial killings of 15 political opponents. **Australia recommends Suriname adequately resource its judicial system, and take steps to ensure the independence of the judiciary.**

Australia welcomes Suriname’s decision in 2015 to pass legislation establishing a National Human Rights Institution. However, we remain concerned the institution falls under the direction of the Ministry of Home Affairs which potentially compromises its independence. **Australia recommends that Suriname establish an independent national human rights institution that conforms to the Paris Principles.**

Australia is pleased to note that Suriname is one of only three CARICOM countries in which consensual same-sex sexual activity has been decriminalised. **Australia recommends Suriname enact legislation that specifically addresses discrimination against LGBTI individuals.**