**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 26th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Haiti**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia welcomes the engagement of Haiti in the Universal Periodic Review process. We recognise the impact that Hurricane Matthew and the cholera epidemic have had on Haiti’s socio-economic situation, compounded by the ongoing effects of the 2010 earthquake.

Australia is concerned that women and girls continue to be subjected to widespread gender discrimination and mistreatment. **Australia recommends Haiti adopt and effectively implement comprehensive legislation criminalising rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment and other forms of violence.**

Australia regrets the continuing electoral and institutional uncertainties, including failure to meet agreed election deadlines, limited resources available to the institutions of State and the lack of independence of the judiciary, noting the profound effect on Haiti’s citizens. **Australia recommends Haiti ensure the judiciary, including the Supreme Council of the Judiciary (CSPJ) is provided with adequate resources and able to operate free from political interference.**

Australia commends Haiti for its efforts to sign a number of international human rights treaties, but notes that most have not been ratified or that there are long delays in the enactment of implementing laws. **Australia recommends that Haiti, in consultation with civil society, adopt a plan of action to prioritise, ratify and implement key international human rights treaties.**

Australia acknowledges Haiti has abolished the death penalty. **Australia recommends Haiti formalise its commitment to the abolition of the death penalty by ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.**