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

**Universal Periodic Review of Lithuania**

**Statement by Australia**

The Government of Australia commends Lithuania for its commitment to protect and advance human rights.

Australia welcomes Lithuania’s National Roma Integration Strategy (Action Plan), which defines the roadmap for public policies aimed at the social inclusion of the Roma, enhancing self-awareness in the Roma community and increasing public tolerance. **Australia recommends that Lithuania continue to implement the National Roma Integration Strategy, while addressing areas for improvement noted in the European Commission’s 2014 assessment of progress.**

Australia remains concerned about poor conditions in prisons and detention centres in Lithuania, particularly excessive use of force and overcrowding. We acknowledge that Lithuanian authorities offer training programs to prison officers on the use of physical force and the efforts made to tackle prison overcrowding through non-custodial measures and developing alternatives to imprisonment. **Australia recommends that Lithuania continue work to ensure prison and detention centre conditions comply with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.**

Australia remains concerned about the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBTI) people in Lithuania. While the holding of the annual Baltic Pride March in Lithuania is a positive step, **Australia recommends that Lithuania continue to address homophobia and discrimination through better education programs and ensure that LGBTI people are able to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.**