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

**Universal Periodic Review of South Sudan**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia acknowledges South Sudan’s ratification of the Conventions Against Torture, on the Rights of the Child and on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the four Geneva Conventions. We urge the government to fulfil its obligations under these instruments.

Australia is deeply concerned about the lack of protection for human rights in South Sudan and urges the Government to protect human rights enshrined in the constitution.

Australia strongly condemns ongoing grave human rights abuses by all parties, including widespread use of sexual violence against women and girls. We urge the Government to ensure perpetrators, including Government forces, are brought to justice.

**Australia is deeply concerned by attacks on journalists, human rights defenders and humanitarian workers, and recommends South Sudan ensure the protection of and access to all areas by these persons.**

Australia remains concerned about reports of child soldier recruitment by all parties. **Australia recommends South Sudan immediately cease recruiting child soldiers and ensure their rehabilitation.**

Human rights violations must be addressed through a genuine process of accountability so South Sudan can move forward. **Australia recommends South Sudan work with the African Union to establish the Hybrid Court set out in the August 2015 Peace Agreement.**

**Australia recommends South Sudan establish a formal moratorium on the death penalty with a view to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.**