**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 27th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of South Africa**

**Statement by Australia**

The Government of Australia commends South Africa on its strong human rights framework. We encourage South Africa to continue its efforts to fully implement its constitutional human rights protections.

Australia welcomes South Africa’s adoption of its first White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2015. **Australia recommends South Africa prioritise implementing the right to an inclusive basic education for all children with disabilities.**

Australia remains deeply concerned about the high level of sexual and gender-based violence affecting women and girls in South Africa. Australia supports South Africa’s continuing work to address this problem.

Australia also acknowledges that South Africa is taking steps to combat racial discrimination and xenophobia, including through work on the *Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill*. We encourage South Africa to continue efforts to end recurrent xenophobia and xenophobic attacks. **Australia recommends that South Africa work to hold perpetrators of xenophobic violence to account.**

Australia notes South Africa’s strong civil society and judicial system, and is confident that South Africa will continue to protect the independence of its media, courts and civil society.

**Australia recommends South Africa accede to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.**