**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 44th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Azerbaijan**

**14 November 2023**

**Statement by Australia**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

Australia encourages Azerbaijan to continue to work with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to build a disability rights framework and to combat gender-based violence. We will continue to monitor Azerbaijan’s progress to ensure the rights and security of ethnic Armenian residents of Nagorno-Karabakh, including those who wish to return from Armenia, are upheld.

Australia recommends **Azerbaijan:**

1. **Immediately investigate allegations of illegal killings and torture by Azerbaijani soldiers during the 2020 war with Armenia, and during fighting in September 2022.**
2. **Cease arbitrary arrests of those critical of the Government, and release those held on politically-motivated charges.**
3. **Investigate allegations of ill-treatment within the Azerbaijani criminal justice system and hold perpetrators to account.**

[121 words]