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

**Universal Periodic Review of Turkmenistan**

**6 November 2023**

**Statement by Australia**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

Australia commends Turkmenistan’s cooperation with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and notes Turkmenistan’s efforts to take steps to uphold human rights through its recent release of political prisoners.

Australia is concerned by reports of torture, arbitrary detention of those exercising rights to freedom of expression and of association, and of forced labour in the cotton sector.

Australia recommends **Turkmenistan:**

1. **Establish a national human rights institution compliant with the Paris Principles.**
2. **Facilitate visits by Human Rights Council special procedure mandate holders.**
3. **Uphold the rights of women by removing restrictions on women’s appearance, personal freedoms, and sexual and reproductive rights.**

[109 words]