**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 28th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Republic of Korea**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia commends the Republic of Korea on thirty continuous years of democratic elections and constitutional enshrinement of human rights.

Australia welcomes the Republic of Korea’ actions to address gender inequality, but encourages greater efforts to reduce inequality, including through supporting increased participation of women in the workforce. Australia is concerned the Republic of Korea has not adopted comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, despite accepting this recommendation at the last Universal Periodic Review. **Australia recommends the Republic of Korea adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, including protections for LGBTI persons.**

Australia remains concerned by the imprisonment of conscientious objectors to military service and **recommends the Republic of Korea introduce an alternative non‑punitive service of genuinely civilian character, under civilian control and of a length comparable to military service.**

Australia notes that, while the Republic of Korea has not carried out an execution for 20 years, the death penalty remains applicable and courts continue to sentence people to death. Australia **recommends the Republic of Korea abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.**