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

**Universal Periodic Review of Ukraine**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia commends Ukraine’s efforts to establish a strong legislative and institutional framework to protect and advance human rights, particularly in light of challenges in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. **Australia recommends the Ukrainian government continue implementation of its legislative and institutional framework to protect and advance human rights, to ensure practical improvements on the ground.**

Australia reiterates its commitment to Ukraine’s territorial integrity. We remain concerned at the disproportionate effect of conflict on civilians. **We call on all parties to guarantee international organisations’ unimpeded access to Crimea and the conflict zones in eastern Ukraine, and to implement their Minsk 2 obligations**.

We are concerned by limitations in legislation and institutions designed to counter gender-based violence and to advance gender equality. **We recommend Ukraine implement further legislation, law enforcement reform, and practical efforts to combat violence against women and to advance gender equality.**

While noting ongoing efforts to reform the Ukrainian judicial system, we remain concerned by reports of continued judicial corruption and failure to fully investigate or prosecute human rights abuses. **We recommend Ukraine increase its efforts to ensure fair and effective judicial processes, particularly with regard to human rights abuses.**

We are concerned by reported increases in human trafficking in and from Ukraine.  **We encourage Ukraine to increase its efforts to protect people who are at high risk of being trafficked.**