**Statement by Bulgaria**

United Nations Human Rights Council

37th session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review

***Review of Australia***

20 January 2021

Madame/Mr. Vice-President,

Bulgaria warmly welcomes the delegation of Australia and thanks for the presentation of the national report.

We commend Australia for having made significant achievements in the realisation of human rights since the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). We acknowledge that COVID-19 is presenting new challenges in the protection of human rights across Australia and take note of the Australian government response to COVID-19. We particularly note that Australia is a successful multicultural society and is home to a diversity of faiths. A remarkable change to the national anthem was made recently to reflect the country's long indigenous history.

Bulgaria would like to recognize that the COVID – 19 pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.

While cognizant that the government is working to develop a new National Disability Strategy /NDS/, planned for release in mid-2021, Bulgaria would like to address the following recommendations to Australia:

1. Include a focus on the rights of children with disabilities in any national plan of action for the realization of the rights of the child.
2. Conduct consultations with organizations of persons with disabilities with a view to develop a national action plan for inclusive education.

We wish the delegation of Australia a successful review!

Thank you.