**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 38th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Niger**

**Statement by Australia**

**3 May 2021**

Australia congratulates Niger on its recent election and the successful transition of power. We commend Niger for its active participation as part of the G5 Sahel to end extremism in the region and promote stability.

We welcome the President’s 2019 decree to commute all death sentences to life imprisonment, but are concerned the death penalty remains a sentencing option.

Australia welcomes Niger’s efforts to promote women’s rights including its national gender policy, but we remain concerned by the high rate of child marriage.

Australia recommends that **Niger:**

1. Continue to ensure human rights are protected during efforts to counter extremist activity within its territory and work with regional partners to combat terrorism and promote stability in the region.
2. Continue efforts to promote the rights of women and girls, enact legislation prohibiting child marriage and amend Article 144 of the Civil Code to increase the age of marriage for girls to 18.
3. Remove the death penalty as a sentencing option and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.