**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 39th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Tajikistan**

**Statement by Australia**

**Thursday 4 November 2021**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

Australia welcomes Tajikistan’s plan to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, efforts to criminalise domestic violence, and amendments to its Criminal Code bringing the definition of torture into line with the Convention against Torture.

Australia urges Tajikistan to fulfil its obligations under all international human rights instruments to which it is a party.

Australia recommends that **Tajikistan:**

1. **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.**
2. **Implement the previous cycle’s 11 recommendations on the right to a fair trial, independence of the judiciary and measures to protect lawyers.**
3. **Uphold rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, and of religion and belief, including through ending the detention of political prisoners.**
4. **Uphold the right to participate in public and political life, including by allowing peaceful opposition groups and parties to operate freely.**
5. **Ensure freedom of the media by protecting journalists and media workers against civil and criminal provisions and intimidation aimed at suppressing critical reporting on matters of public interest.**