**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 40th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Venezuela**

**Statement by Australia**

**25 January 2022**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

Australia holds grave concerns for the human rights of the Venezuelan people and is alarmed by the longstanding and now escalating erosion of democracy. We hope Venezuela’s engagement in the UPR will contribute to improving the human rights situation.

Australia recommends that **Venezuela:**

1. **Cooperate with international human rights instruments and mechanisms, including supporting regular and unrestricted UN Special Procedures visits.**
2. **Release persons detained or arrested for political reasons and refrain from, and prevent, violence and retaliatory action.**
3. **Work with humanitarian organisations to design and implement a principled national plan addressing the ongoing humanitarian emergency, prioritising groups in vulnerable situations.**
4. **Fully respect democracy, including by ensuring the separation of powers, due process, respect for human rights and a safe and enabling environment for civil society groups.**
5. **Undertake independent, thorough, and prompt investigations into all cases of human rights violations and ensure perpetrators are held accountable.**