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

**Universal Periodic Review of Uganda**

**Statement by Australia**

**27 January 2022**

Thank you President,

Australia welcomes Uganda’s finalisation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, its achievements in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and its ongoing generous assistance to refugees.

Australia is concerned by increased restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, including the suppression of opposition political parties following the 2021 elections, as well as proposed laws that would further marginalise the LGBTI community and sex workers.

Australia recommends that **Uganda:**

1. **Establish a formal moratorium on the death penalty with a view to ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.**
2. **Strengthen legislative and policy frameworks to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence, and improve access to justice and support for survivors, including by strengthening referral systems for support services.**
3. **Promote an open civic and political space and uphold the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly by repealing all laws and policies that restrict the activities of human rights defenders.**
4. **Repeal all sections of the Penal Code that criminalise consensual same-sex relations between adults, and protect LGBTI persons from violence and hate speech.**