**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 41st Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Ecuador**

**Statement by Australia**

**7 November 2022**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

We commend Ecuador for its progress towards human rights promotion and protection since its last Universal Periodic Review in May 2017. We particularly acknowledge measures which ensure the protection of free speech, such as proposed amendments to the Organic Law of Communication (May 2021) and granting amnesty to land defenders, environmental activists, and Indigenous leaders (March 2022).

Australia recommends that Ecuador:

1. **Safeguard people’s right to peaceful assembly. Where protests turn violent, and the lawful use of force and firearms is unavoidable, ensure that the response by law enforcement is reasonable, necessary, and proportionate.**
2. **Advance economic, social and cultural rights, in particular for those disproportionately affected by poverty, including Indigenous Peoples, those living in remote communities, women, children, and persons with disabilities.**
3. **Take immediate and additional steps to improve prison conditions, with particular attention given to measures that address overcrowding, violence, and inadequate health services.**