**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 43rd Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Tonga**

**1 May 2023**

**Statement by Australia**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

**Australia commends Tonga for launching an Empowerment and Gender Equality National Policy Plan and developing a National Disability Policy to improve the rights of women and persons with disabilities. We welcome progress made on community awareness and sectoral consultations with NGOs and faith-based organisations. We encourage Tonga to use robust data to inform decision-making, planning and service delivery, and to ensure sustainable funding for these policies.**

Australia recommends **Tonga:**

1. Ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
2. Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Second Optional Protocol, with a view to abolition of the death penalty.
3. Ratify and implement into national law the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

**[138 words]**