**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 29th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Montenegro**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia commends Montenegro on its efforts to promote the rights of LGBTI people, including through the adoption of an *Action Plan for Achieving Gender Equality 2017-2021*; however, we are concerned by reports that the implementation of protective laws is inconsistent, resulting in discrimination and violence against LGBTI people. **Australia** **recommends Montenegro appropriately resource the implementation of the *Action Plan for Achieving Gender Equality 2017-2021* and monitor its implementation.**

Australia welcomes the formation of an ad hoc Commission and Parliamentary Committee to monitor reports of violence against journalists in Montenegro. While acknowledging these efforts to protect journalists and freedom of expression, we remain concerned at reports of undue political influence and intimidation of journalists. **Australia recommends Montenegro take steps to ensure the ad hoc Commission and Parliamentary Committee are accountable and effective in monitoring reports of violence against journalists.**

Australia is concerned by reports that corruption remains prevalent amongst the police and the judiciary, and in the health, higher education and employment sectors. **Australia recommends Montenegro take further steps to address corruption and ensure a thorough and consistent approach to investigations and prosecutions in relation to corruption**.