**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 30th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Colombia**

**Statement by Australia**

Australia commends Colombia on signing the peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. Implementing the peace agreement provides an historic opportunity to improve human rights in Colombia. **Australia recommends Colombia commit the necessary legal, institutional and financial resources to implement the Agreement without delay in order to achieve sustainable peace**.

Australia is concerned at the targeted killing and harassment of community leaders, human rights defenders, and witnesses in criminal proceedings related to human rights violations. The lack of accountability for perpetrators is especially disturbing. **Australia recommends Colombia strengthen efforts to protect activists and investigate alleged human rights violations and abuses, including by implementing guidelines set out in the Attorney-General’s directive 002/2017.**

Australia acknowledges legislative efforts to address gender-based violence, but remains concerned at persistent inequality in accessing justice, particularly for minors. We note Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence. **Australia recommends Colombia take further measures to guarantee reparations for child victims of the conflict and ensure access to justice for victims of sexual violence, including Indigenous and Afro-Colombian women, and women living in rural areas.**

Finally, while welcoming the establishment of the Restitutions of Lands special unit, **Australia once again recommends Colombia improve its land restitution processes in order to provide timely justice for victims**.

**Words 211**