**Universal Periodic Review Working Group – 36th Session**

**Universal Periodic Review of Honduras**

**Statement by Australia**

**5 November 2020**

Thank you, [President/Vice President]

Australia notes Honduras’ human rights challenges and welcomes its engagement in the UPR process and efforts to strengthen its human rights framework, including by creating the National Protection Mechanism and the Special Prosecutor's Office for Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials.

Australia is concerned by the growing civil unrest and violence in Honduras. We urge Honduras to follow through with needed reforms to its electoral, political and judicial systems to increase protection for the human rights of its citizens.

Australia recommends that **Honduras:**

1. **Adopt proposed reforms negotiated and tentatively agreed to during the UN-backed dialogue, especially those that will strengthen the rule of law and the country's electoral, political and judicial systems.**
2. **Increase protections for LGBTI individuals, journalists and human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, from threats and attacks and fully investigate, prosecute and punish all acts of violence in accordance with the law.**
3. **Respect and protect the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.**

**[178 Words]**