



Australian Government

Australia's fourth Universal Periodic Review

Draft National Report

I. Introduction

1. Australia has an enduring commitment to protecting and promoting human rights. This is reflected in our significant and longstanding approaches to human rights domestically and internationally.

2. Since Australia's third cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2021, Australia has continued to take considerable action to support the realisation of human rights. This includes, for example:

- a. Significant work and investment at all levels of government to **combat gender-based violence**, supported by the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*.
- b. **Strengthening the rights of workers** through delivering a significant reform agenda to support secure jobs, better wages and a fairer workplace relations system.
- c. Continuing to support **real action to make a positive and tangible difference to the lives of First Nations people**, including through substantial investment.
- d. Delivering reform to **stamp out hate speech** through stronger legislative protections.
- e. Continuing to support the **rights of people with disability**, including through a review of *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031* and ongoing investment in the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- f. Ensuring there are structured national plans in place to **support the rights of both children and older Australians**, including through launching the *Early Years Strategy 2024-2034* and working towards finalising the *National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2025-2035*.
- g. Launching the *National Action Plan for the Health and Wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ People*, which sets out an ambitious plan to **improve care and support for LGBTIQ+ people** through better access to safe, respectful, high-quality and inclusive health and wellbeing services.
- h. Boosting **protections for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers**, including through legislating protections against the exploitation of temporary migrant workers and continuing to provide significant support for humanitarian refugees.
- i. Taking **practical actions to reduce emissions and respond to climate change** as part of Australia's *Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement*.

3. Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate in the fourth cycle of the UPR to discuss achievements and opportunities for the protection and promotion of human rights.

II. Methodology and consultation

4. This report was prepared by the Australian Government in collaboration with the governments of Australia's states and territories.

5. The report outlines measures taken to implement accepted recommendations, voluntary commitments and pledges from Australia's third cycle UPR. [PLACEHOLDER – Annex 1 provides additional detail on the status of implementation of all third cycle UPR recommendations. Annex 1 will be developed following input sought through this consultation process].

6. The footnotes in the report refer to the relevant recommendations and voluntary commitments from Australia's third cycle UPR and Australia's pledges from the Human Rights 75 initiative.

7. [PLACEHOLDER – INCLUDE DETAILS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY]

8. To further strengthen Australia's engagement with the fourth UPR, the Australian Government provided a grant of \$110,000 to an Australian NGO (the Human Rights Law Centre) to lead the preparation of a joint NGO alternative report for Australia's fourth cycle UPR.

III. Australia's human rights framework

A. Domestic frameworks¹

1. Human rights in Australia are protected and advanced through the Australian Constitution, legislation and institutions, as well as the common law. Under Australia's federal system, legislative, executive and judicial powers are divided between the Australian Government and the governments of six states and two internal self-governing territories, each of which are responsible for protecting and promoting human rights.

9. All jurisdictions in Australia have mechanisms which seek to ensure that governments act consistently with Australia's international obligations. There is a legislative requirement that federal legislation be accompanied by a Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights. This process encourages early and ongoing consideration of human rights in policy and legislative development.

10. All jurisdictions in Australia have comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that implement rights to non-discrimination and equality. All jurisdictions also have a board or

¹ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.44-46, 146.48, 146.50, 146.57, 146.62, 146.64-65, 146.68, 146.92-93, 1146.07, 146.273-274.

commission that oversees human rights and anti-discrimination, with functions that include the determination or conciliation of complaints of discrimination brought under legislation operating in the particular jurisdiction, and human rights education and awareness-raising.

11. Three jurisdictions in Australia have enacted statutory human rights instruments which identify a number of basic rights and freedoms, based on the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.

12. The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is Australia's independent A-status National Human Rights Institution. The AHRC receives an annual appropriation from the Australian Government and own-source revenue for sales of goods and rendering of services.

13. Australian Government action to strengthen the AHRC during the reporting period included:

- a. A funding boost of \$49.8 million over 4 years from 2022-23, including:
 - i. \$31.8 million in additional funding to sustain the ongoing work of the AHRC;
 - ii. \$10.5 million for the AHRC to implement recommendations following the *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment Report*; and
 - iii. \$7.5 million for the AHRC to develop a *National Anti-Racism Strategy* and extend its anti-racism campaign.
- b. Amendments to the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth), requiring that AHRC appointments are made by a publicly advertised merit-based selection process, consistent with the Paris Principles.
- c. The development of the Policy and Guidelines for Appointments to the AHRC.

B. International frameworks²

14. Australia has a long tradition of commitment to human rights and actively contributing to, and supporting, human rights on the international stage. Australian domestic law reflects its obligations under the seven core treaties to which it is a party, consistent with Australia's Constitution and federal system of government. Australian governments deliver a wide range of programs and services that give effect to Australia's international human rights obligations.

15. Since Australia's third UPR, Australia ratified four International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions and one ILO protocol. Australia has now ratified all 10 fundamental ILO conventions.

16. Australia has continued its positive and collaborative engagement with the UN to support reporting and information sharing on human rights. Since 2021, Australia has

² [A/HRC/47/8](#), para 146.36.

submitted its Common Core Document, submitted reports to two UN treaty body committees and appeared before two. Australia has hosted visits from six Special Rapporteurs/Special Procedure Mandate Holders.

IV. Implementation of accepted recommendations, voluntary commitments and pledges to the Human Rights 75 Initiative

A. Civil and political rights³

Freedom of expression

17. The Australian Government believes a strong and independent media is vital to democracy and holding governments to account. Steps to protect press freedom and the public's right to know include:

- a. 2023 amendments to the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* (Cth) to improve the public sector whistle-blower scheme.
- b. The *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022* (Cth) includes strong safeguards to protect the identities of journalists' sources with respect to a corruption investigation and uphold the public interest associated with a free press.
- c. Committing in 2023 and 2024 to reforms to secrecy offences to improve protections for press freedom, including in response to the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor's statutory review of the secrecy offences in Part 5.6 of the *Criminal Code 1995* (Cth) (Criminal Code).
- d. Implementing the Australian Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security (PJCS)'s recommendations in its inquiry in 2020 into the impact of the exercise of law enforcement and intelligence powers on freedom of the press.
- e. The newly introduced framework for a statutory tort for serious invasions of privacy includes an exemption for journalists and entities facilitating journalism, and a mechanism for the early determination of exemptions.

Freedom of religion⁴

18. Under the *Australian Constitution*, the Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

³ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.174, 181

⁴ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.68, 146.73, 146.75, 146.77, 146.81, 146.86, 146.94, 146.97, 146.174

19. Most Australian states and territories prohibit discrimination on religious grounds. At the federal level, prohibitions on discrimination on religious grounds specifically in employment are found in the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) (Fair Work Act).

Freedom of peaceful assembly

20. Australian governments recognise the rights of an individual to assemble and protest peacefully. This is an important right in any democracy. The rights to freedom of expression and freedom of political communication are fundamental human rights that are enjoyed by all Australians, and all people who are in Australia. However, these rights are subject to limitations that are reasonable and necessary in a free and democratic society to achieve an appropriate balance between freedom of expression and the protection of groups and individuals from offensive or harmful behaviour.

Privacy

21. Effective privacy laws are essential to Australians' choice and control over their personal information and trust in government services. The *Privacy and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024* (Cth) implements a first tranche of proposals to strengthen privacy protections, following a comprehensive review of Australia's *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act). It includes a new statutory tort for serious invasions of privacy, criminal offences for doxxing, and transparency about automated decisions that significantly affect individuals' rights or interests.

B. Economic, social and cultural rights⁵

Health outcomes for communities at risk of vulnerability

22. The Australian Government continues to lay the foundations for longer-term reform of the health care system to better distribute the health and care workforce through strategic investments and development and implementation of comprehensive workforce strategies to alleviate increased pressures and demands on Australia's health and care workforce, particularly in regional, rural and remote settings.

23. The Australian Government is building a stronger Medicare, relieving pressure on the hospital system, making it easier for people to see a primary care health provider, and easing cost-of-living pressures for people living in regional, rural and remote Australia.

24. In responding to the unique needs of places, the role of Primary Health Networks has been enhanced to commission multidisciplinary care providers for communities served by

⁵ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.105, 146.199, 146.202-204, 146. 230;

smaller practices, including culturally and linguistically diverse, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and rural and remote communities.

25. For further information see Part IV.D Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; Part IV.F Rights of persons with disabilities; Part IV.G Rights of children; Part IV.I Sexual orientation, gender identity; and intersex status; Part IV.K Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Education

26. The Government is committed to ensuring all Australians have equitable access to quality education. This commitment aligns with targets, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Closing the Gap.

27. The Australian Curriculum's Cross-Curriculum Priority: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures provides First Nations students with the ability to see themselves, their identities and cultures reflected in the curriculum; and allows all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

C. Rights of women⁶

28. The Australian Government is committed to achieving gender equality with a focus on ending gender-based violence, valuing unpaid and paid care, increasing economic equality and security, improving health outcomes, and increasing leadership, and representation and decision-making.

29. The *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (SDA) is the key piece of Commonwealth legislation making discrimination against women unlawful. Since 2021, the SDA has been amended to:

- a. Introduce a positive duty on employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate sex discrimination, sexual and sex based-harassment, hostile work environments on the ground of sex, and certain acts of victimisation in the workplace context as far as possible.
- b. Expressly prohibit harassment and conduct on the ground of sex that results in a workplace environment that is hostile.
- c. Apply the scope of sexual harassment protections to all workers.
- d. Provide the AHRC with compliance and enforcement functions in relation to the positive duty and a broad inquiry function in relation to systemic unlawful discrimination.

⁶ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.66-67, 146.106, 146.125, 146.128-133, 146.195-198, 146.208-210, 146.212-222, 146.224-227, 146.281.

30. The National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032 (National Plan) sets out Australia's vision to end gender-based violence in Australia in one generation. The National Plan outlines this across four domains: prevention; early intervention; response; recovery; and healing.

31. In October 2022, the Australian Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner commenced. The Commissioner's role is to provide evidence-based policy advice to the Government, promote coordination across jurisdictions and amplify the voices of people with lived experience.

32. In May 2024, the Australian Government announced funding of \$925.2 million from 2023-24 over five years to permanently establish the Leaving Violence Program. The Program provides eligible victim-survivors of intimate partner violence with \$5000 in financial support, as well as safety planning, risk assessments and referrals to other services for those who have already left or want to leave a violent intimate partner relationship.

33. In September 2024, the National Cabinet agreed to a comprehensive \$4.7 billion package to prevent gender-based violence and support legal services. This includes:

- a. Innovative approaches to better identify and respond to high-risk perpetrators of family and domestic violence and share information about them across systems and jurisdictions.
- b. Delivering support for frontline specialist and legal services responding to violence.
- c. Services to support children and young people who have experienced and been exposed to violence to heal and recover.
- d. Addressing the role that systems and harmful industries play in exacerbating violence.

National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence

34. In September 2023, the Australian, state and territory governments released the *National Principles to Address Coercive Control in Family and Domestic Violence* (National Principles), which set out a shared understanding of the common features and impacts of coercive control, as well as guiding considerations to inform responses to this issue.

35. In addition, the Australian Government has also developed a range of supporting resources to accompany the National Principles to improve awareness of coercive control. This includes fact sheets, videos, dedicated resources for First Nations audiences, language translations and resources for healthcare practitioners to recognise and respond to coercive control.

Family law reform - impact of family violence in property settlements

36. Women are more likely to be victims of family violence and to experience financial difficulties after separation. In November 2024, the Australian Parliament passed amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) (Family Law Act) to improve the resolution of family law property disputes. The changes make clear that the economic effect of family violence (including economic and financial abuse) is a relevant consideration in determining the division of property and finances following separation. This will help ensure victim-survivors of family violence achieve a fairer property settlement.

Workplace gender equality

37. Since Australia's third UPR, Australia has introduced reforms to put gender equality at the centre of the workplace relations system. Between 2021 and 2024, the Fair Work Act was amended to:

- a. Add gender equality and job security as objects of the Fair Work Act.
- b. Address sexual harassment and other forms of sex discrimination in the workplace.
- c. Ensure all national system employees are entitled to 10 days of paid family and domestic violence leave each year.
- d. Empower the Fair Work Commission to improve pay and conditions for working women.
- e. Strengthen access to unpaid parental leave.
- f. Strengthen access to flexible working arrangements.
- g. Introduce a right to disconnect, to respond to the modern challenges of availability creep, unpaid labour and balancing paid work and care responsibilities.

38. The Australian Government has also taken significant action to stamp out sexual harassment from Australian workplaces, including through implementing all 55 recommendations from the AHRC's Respect@Work Report. This included amending the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) to introduce a positive duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment and amending the *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986* (Cth) to insert a cost protection provision that prevents a court from ordering an applicant to pay a respondent's costs in discrimination cases, except in limited circumstances.

39. The Australian Government has funded working women's centres in every Australian state and territory to provide free information, advocacy, advice and assistance to women who are experiencing sexual harassment, discrimination and other workplace issues, and a

new National Body to facilitate collaboration and coordination of services (\$37.6 million over 4 years from 2023-24, with \$8 million per year ongoing from 2027-28).

40. Australia has improved transparency and reporting on gender pay gaps including amendments to the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Cth), (WGE Act) in 2023 to require federal public sector employers, in addition to non-public sector employers, to report annually on gender equality indicators and enhance information sharing. The gender pay gap of individual employers is also published annually.

41. The Australian Government has also passed the *Workplace Gender Equality Amendment (Setting Gender Equality Targets) Act 2025* (Cth), which requires large employers to take action to improve gender equality in their workplaces by setting and committing to achieve gender equality targets.

42. In March 2024, the Australian Government released *Working for Women: A Strategy for Gender Equality* (Working for Women). The 10-year strategy outlines the Australian Government's vision for gender equality – an Australia where people are safe, treated with respect, have choices, and have access to resources and equal outcomes no matter their gender. Working for Women recognises that gender equality cannot be achieved by Government alone – every individual, community, organisation and institution have a role to play to create change.

43. The Government's ambition for gender equality also means that men should be able to live free of gendered expectations and restrictions, and to take on greater caring roles within their families.

Participation of women in political life

Representation of women in political life

Women represent 49.5 per cent of the 48th Australian Parliament (as of June 2025). The Cabinet, currently consisting of 23 Ministers, includes 12 women (52.2 per cent) which is the highest number in Cabinet in Australia's history. Out of 42 total Ministers, 19 (45.2 per cent) are women.

D. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples⁷

National Agreement on Closing the Gap

44. The *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (Closing the Gap) is a landmark and unique commitment by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments to

⁷ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.51, 146.54, 146.71, 146.73, 146.88-90, 146.93, 146.106-107, 146.114, 146.122, 146.136-137, 146.199, 146.204, 146.208, 146.215, 146.219-220, 146.224, 146.253-258, 146.260-271, 146.273-276, 146.278-284, 146.287, 146.289-291, 156-158.

work together in partnership to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. Closing the Gap contains:

- a. Four Priority Reforms, which are the foundation of change. These reforms are critical, as they fundamentally shift how governments work with First Nations people, embedding genuine partnerships, decision-making and self-determination into policy and practice.
- b. Seventeen socio-economic outcomes, which reflect key areas where progress is needed to improve the lives of First Nations people.
- c. Nineteen targets, which are tools for measuring progress against socio-economic outcomes and, ultimately, the success of the Priority Reforms.

45. The Australian Government's 2025 *Implementation Plan* outlines 194 specific commitments across all socio-economic targets and Priority Reforms for delivery in 2025.

Constitutional recognition

46. On 14 October 2023, the Australian Government delivered on its commitment to hold a referendum about whether to change the Australian Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing a body called the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

47. The referendum was not carried. The Australian Government respects the decision of the Australian people and the democratic process that delivered it. The outcome of the vote does not affect work already underway across the Australian Government to support better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It does not affect the Australian Government's commitment to reconciliation.

Overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system

48. The Australian Government recognises that the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system regrettably results from intergenerational trauma, racism, disempowerment, dispossession, the impacts of colonisation, the forced removal of First Nations children, and compounded entrenched socio-economic disadvantage.

49. All Australian governments are working closely through Closing the Gap and the Justice Policy Partnership to address the underlying causes of the overrepresentation of First Nations people in the criminal justice system and reduce First Nations incarceration rates, including through the *National Access to Justice Partnership 2025-2030* and the National Justice Reinvestment Program and the Justice Reinvestment in Central Australia Program.

Preservation of cultural heritage

50. Australia is committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages are strong, supported and fundamental, consistent with Targets 15 and 16 of Closing the Gap.

51. Under these targets, programs and policies have been established to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to land and sea to see a sustained increase in the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken.

Improving education outcomes

52. The Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership under Closing the Gap supports genuine and shared decision-making by bringing together government and First Nations representatives to develop recommendations to improve early childhood outcomes for First Nations children and families.

53. Under Australia's federal system, states and territories have primary responsibility for primary and secondary education in their respective jurisdictions. The Australian Government works in partnership with First Nations partners and all levels of government to achieve Closing the Gap early childhood targets.

Improving health outcomes

54. Closing the Gap Targets 1 and 2 are that everyone enjoys healthy lives and children are born healthy and strong. The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031* sets out a nationally agreed policy framework to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations people. The Australian Government funds a national network of 120 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, to deliver, comprehensive, culturally appropriate primary health care for First Nations people.

55. Target 14 of Closing the Gap is a significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards zero. The Australian Government is dedicated to supporting and progressing key social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention measures that are led and designed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including through the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Policy Partnerships.

56. The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2025–2035*, aims to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in suicide and self-harm of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leadership and governance.

Responding to violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children

57. Ending violence against women and children, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, is a national priority. Both primary prevention and providing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children are national priority areas under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032* (National Plan).

58. The National Plan includes a dedicated *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan 2023–2025* (Action Plan). Initiatives under the Action Plan focus on addressing the immediate family safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities, while laying the foundations for long-term structural change.

59. For further information on the National Plan see Part IV.C Rights of women.

60. The *Our Ways - Strong Ways - Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence 2025-2035* (Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices) is being developed in partnership and with shared decision-making with First Nations Communities. Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices will set the policy reform agenda for First Nations women and children’s safety over the longer term – guiding a whole of society approach to addressing the unacceptable rates of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

61. Since endorsing the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in 2009, the Australian Government has adopted the guiding principles in its programs and policies and approach to engagement and collaboration. The Australian Government seeks to enhance the fundamental human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and supports their individual and collective rights, including rights to culture, identity, language, employment, health and education. These policies and programs are designed to advance reconciliation in a tangible way, by prioritising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, self-determination, respect and working with state, territory and local governments.

E. Racism⁸

62. The Australian Government has taken a number of actions as part of its multifaceted approach to addressing complex experiences of racism in the community. The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) (RDA) implements Australia’s obligations to eliminate racial discrimination and vilification under the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*.

⁸ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.68-70, 146.72-84, 146.86, 146.91, 146.94-97.

63. All state and territory governments have legislated to prohibit racial discrimination and civil or criminal racial vilification provisions. At the federal level, the Fair Work Act prohibits racial discrimination in the area of employment and the Criminal Code contains hate speech provisions.

64. In December 2023, the Australian Parliament amended the Criminal Code to establish criminal offences for the public display of prohibited Nazi and terrorist organisation symbols, public performance of the Nazi salute and the trading of goods that bear a prohibited Nazi or terrorist organisation symbol.

65. In February 2025, the Australian Parliament passed laws to strengthen Criminal Code hate speech offences for advocating force or violence against groups or members of groups and creating new offences for advocating force or violence against associates and property of members of groups and for threatening force or violence against groups or members of groups or their associates or property.

66. The laws complement a range of existing hate speech protections in Commonwealth, state and territory civil and criminal laws.

Online safety

67. Australia has civil and criminal penalties for conduct which constitutes online hate speech and cyber-racism. The RDA prohibition of racial hatred includes online racial hatred.

68. It is an offence under the Criminal Code to use a carriage service, including the internet, to threaten, menace, harass or cause offence. In 2021, the Australian Government increased the maximum penalty for this offence from three years' imprisonment to five years' imprisonment.

69. In July 2021, the Australian Parliament passed the *Online Safety Act 2021* (Cth) to strengthen Australia's online safety framework. The Online Safety Act empowers the online safety regulator, the eSafety Commissioner, to keep Australians safe online. The eSafety Commissioner's functions also include providing online safety education and advice to Australians and supporting and conducting research about online safety for Australians.

70. In November 2024, the Australian Government announced it will legislate a digital duty of care, which will require the online industry to take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harms.

Education and public awareness

71. In 2022, the Australian Government provided \$7.5 million to the AHRC to develop a *National Anti-Racism Strategy* to tackle racism and promote racial equality in Australia. The Strategy included two streams of work: the development of a *National Anti-Racism Framework*; and an update of the Racism. It Stops with Me campaign to raise public

awareness on racism in Australia, amplify First Nations and other racialised communities' experiences, and support the public to take action against racism.

72. In 2024, the Australian Government appointed Ms Jillian Segal AO as Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism and Mr Aftab Mailk as Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia.

73. In 2024, the Australian Government committed \$2.5 million for the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Mr Giridharan Sivaraman, to lead Racism@Uni: A National Study for Change. The AHRC delivered an interim report to the Australian Government on 17 December 2024. The interim report provides initial insights that reflect stakeholder feedback, emerging themes and key issues.

74. On 29 October 2024, the then Attorney-General referred an inquiry into antisemitism at Australian universities to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights in response to concerns about the rise of antisemitism on university campuses. The Committee tabled its report on 12 February 2025 making 23 recommendations.

75. In November 2024, the Australian Government passed legislation to establish an independent National Student Ombudsman to handle complaints from higher education students about the actions of their higher education provider. The National Student Ombudsman, which commenced on 1 February 2025, can investigate complaints about a broad range of issues, including complaints about antisemitism, Islamophobia or other forms of racism.

Health

76. To address racism within the health sector, the Australian Government has implemented the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031*, including the establishment of The First Nations Health Governance Group to ensure codesign is embedded in planning, implementation and evaluation of First Nations health outcomes.

Multiculturalism

77. In 2024, the Australian Government released the Multicultural Framework Review Report *Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for all* (MFR Report). The report provides a comprehensive and compelling examination of the state of Australian multiculturalism in half a century.

78. The Government Response to the MFR report committed to three core principles of the MFR Report: connection, identity and belonging, and inclusion.

79. The Australian Government has committed more than \$100 million to complement the release of the MFR Report and the Government Response. The commitment focuses on

addressing key priorities such as grants to multicultural communities, translation services and in-language website content.

F. Rights of persons with disabilities⁹

80. During the reporting period, the Australian Government has invested more than \$3 billion to build a safe, inclusive and accessible Australia for people with disability.

Australia's Disability Strategy

81. *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031* (ADS) is a national framework that all Australian governments have signed up to. The ADS was developed by all levels of government together with people with disability, their families, carers, and representatives.

82. In 2024, the ADS was updated following a review which included both public and targeted consultation. Throughout the review, people with disability and representative organisations shared their perspectives on how governments can continue to improve the everyday lives of people with disability.

83. The ADS acknowledges intersectionality and diversity of people with disability in delivering against the policy priorities and outcome areas of the strategy. The ADS, alongside Closing the Gap, seeks to embed a strength-based approach to overcoming system-imposed barriers faced by First Nations people with disability.

Supports for persons with disabilities

National Disability Insurance Scheme

84. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides funding to eligible people with disability to gain more time with family and friends, greater independence, access to new skills, jobs, or volunteering in their community, and an improved quality of life. The NDIS also connects anyone with disability to services in their community.

85. In 2023, the *Final Report of the Independent Review into the National Disability Insurance Scheme* (NDIS Review) laid out the blueprint for reform across all governments to build a stronger NDIS. All Australian governments agreed to immediate action in response to key NDIS Review recommendations.

86. In August 2024, changes to the *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* (Cth) were made by the Australian Parliament - the most significant reform since the creation of the NDIS.

Health services for people with disabilities

⁹ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.55, 146.66, 146.106-107, 146.123, 146.202, 146.220, 146.236, 146.239, 146.243, 146.249-251

87. People with disability attaining the highest possible health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives is an outcome of the ADS. The *National Roadmap for Improving the Health of People with Intellectual Disability* addresses serious health inequities faced by people with intellectual disability. This roadmap is an associated plan under the ADS.

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

88. The Australian Government has invested \$8.1 million to deliver *Equity: the Arts and Disability Associated Plan* (Equity), to build the foundations for equity for artists, arts workers and audiences with disability. Equity is an initiative under *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place*, Australia's Cultural Policy and an associated plan under the ADS.

Employment supports and services for people with disabilities

89. The Australian Government provides a range of disability employment supports and services including:

- a. The Disability Employment Services (DES) is the main employment service for people with disability, injury and/or health conditions. DES will be replaced by Inclusive Employment Australia on 1 November 2025 and will continue to commit around \$1.3 billion each year for the next five years.
- b. The Centre for Inclusive Employment provides resources, tools and training for employment service providers to help them deliver quality employment services.
- c. The *Individual Placement and Support* (IPS) program provides one-on-one to support services for young people aged 12-25.
- d. JobAccess is a national hub for Employment Assistance Fund, workplace and employment information for employers, people with a disability and employment service providers.

90. The Australian Government has committed \$57 million to support the reform of the supported employment sector (i.e. employment for people with disability with high support needs).

Violence against persons with disabilities

91. The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission), was released in September 2023 and made 222 recommendations.

92. The Australian Government is making a significant investment towards the first phase of its response to the Disability Royal Commission, including:

- e. \$39.7 million to establish a new disability advocacy program.
- f. \$2.6 million for the continued delivery of the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline and the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service.

- g. \$4.4 million for consistent approaches to community visitor schemes as a safeguarding mechanism.
- h. \$1.2 million to develop targets to reduce and eliminate restrictive practices.
- i. \$15.6 million to unify national disability quality and safeguarding arrangements.
- j. \$2 million towards the safety of women and girls with disability.

93. Since 2021, the Australian Government committed \$11.117 million (including indexation and supplementation) over four years for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls with disability. This funding is being used to develop resources that improve system and service responses for women and girls with disability when violence occurs.

People with disabilities in the criminal justice system

94. Under the ADS, Australian governments have agreed to work to ensure the criminal justice system responds effectively to the complex needs and vulnerabilities of people with disabilities and to reduce the over-representation of people with disability across the criminal justice system.

95. The *National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement* commits all Australian governments to improving mental health and well-being outcomes and reducing suicide for priority populations groups, including people with a disability and people who are (or were previously) in contact with the criminal justice system.

Disability Royal Commission recommendations on criminal justice and people with disability

96. The Australian government and state and territory governments accepted a number of Disability Royal Commission recommendations on the criminal justice system and people with disability, including:

- a. Reviewing the National Statement of Principles Relating to Persons Unfit to Plead or Found Not Guilty by Reason of Cognitive or Mental Health Impairment.
- b. Reviewing data collection and publication practices relating to persons unfit to plead or found not guilty by reason of cognitive or mental health impairment.
- c. Ensuring that people with disability have equal access to justice.
- d. Working together to clarify roles and responsibilities at the interface between the NDIS and justice services.
- e. Improving police responses to people with disability.

Anti-discrimination

97. The Australian Government has committed \$6.9 million to review and modernise the DDA in response to recommendations made by the Disability Royal Commission.

G. Rights of children¹⁰

98. The *Early Years Strategy 2024-2034* (the Strategy) sets out an overarching vision for children in Australia, along with clear goals to ensure children aged 0-5, and their families, can learn, grow and thrive. The Strategy is built on five key Principles, eight Outcomes and four Priority Focus Areas where the Government will direct effort to achieve its goals.

99. In December 2024, the Government released the *First Action Plan 2024-27* and Outcomes Framework to support the implementation of the Strategy. These documents outline the steps Government is taking to deliver outcomes in line with the Strategy's five Principles and four Priority Focus Areas.

Education

100. The *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement – Full and Fair Funding 2025-2034* aims to improve education outcomes for all Australian students and build on the capability and capacity of the education workforce.

101. In 2024, the Australian Parliament passed legislation to support the Agreement by increasing the amount of funding the Australian Government can provide to states and territory governments for public schools.

Health care for children at risk of vulnerability

102. The *National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People 2020-2030* identifies priority populations which are especially prone to health inequity as a result of social, geographical and other determinants, including children and young people from rural and remote areas, children and young people living with disability and children and young people living in out of home care. The Action Plan calls for focused health policy design, education and service delivery concentrated on the particular needs and circumstances of these priority groups.

Mental health support services

103. The Australian Government is committed to supporting children and young people with, or at risk of, mental illness by improving both mental health early intervention and prevention, and access to mental health support and services.

104. The Australian Government provides a range of programs and plans to support children and young people's mental health including:

¹⁰ A/HRC/47/8, paras 146.66, 146.202, 146.230, 146.234-235.

- a. funding of Primary Health Networks to plan and commission regionally appropriate primary mental health and suicide prevention services according to local need, including mental health services for children and young people.
- b. funding of a national network of 17 Kids Hubs, headspace services and Medicare Mental Health Centres to provide free and low-cost support for individuals who need mental health support.
- c. the 2022 *National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement*, and the *National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy*.

Child safety and protection

105. The National Office for Child Safety leads the development and implementation of several national priorities to support victims and protect children and young people from child sexual abuse.

106. This includes leading the implementation of the 10-year *National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021–2030* (National Strategy) which provides a long-term, consistent and coordinated approach to preventing child sexual abuse in all settings, including institutional, familial and online.

107. In 2021, the Australian Government committed \$49 million over five years to design frontline service delivery models in partnership with First Nations organisations to better support First Nations families with multiple and complex needs with the aim of reducing the number of First Nations children coming into child protection systems.

108. *Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031* is Australia's framework to reduce child abuse and neglect and its intergenerational impacts. The National Framework drives change through collective effort across governments and sectors that impact the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

109. *Safe and Supported* implementation by its *First Action Plan 2023-26* and *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023-26* is underpinned by the *Safe and Supported Partnership Agreement*, a commitment between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Group (Leadership Group), the Australian Government, and all state and territory governments. The Partnership Agreement ensures that all Australian governments and the Leadership Group make decisions together about issues that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

110. On 13 January 2025, the Commonwealth established a National Commissioner for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People. The Commissioner's role is to protect and promote the rights, interests and wellbeing of First Nations children and young people.

111. In 2022, the Australian Government invested \$10 million over 5 years to develop the *National Child and Family Investment Strategy*, a set of national principles and actions to reconsider funding priorities for the child and family service system, and shift from crisis driven responses towards preventative and early supports to reduce child abuse and neglect. This includes testing the practical implementation of the Investment Strategy through the Innovation Fund grant.

112. Children can be particularly vulnerable to online harms. In late 2024 the Privacy Act was amended to require a Children's Online Privacy Code to be developed by Australia's privacy regulator by December 2026. This Code will set out how certain digital services must comply with the Australian Privacy Principles when handling children's personal information.

Family Law Reform

113. In 2023, the Australian Parliament amended the Family Law Act to create a more child-focused framework for making parenting orders. The amendments ensure the best interests of children are at the forefront of family law proceedings.

H. Older Australians¹¹

114. The Australian Government responded to the 148 recommendations made in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety by committing additional funding for aged care and introducing a new Aged Care Act.

115. The new *Aged Care Act 2024* (Cth) places older people at the centre of the aged care system. The new Act establishes a new supporter framework, which reinforces older peoples' right to make decisions that affect their lives and supports their right to autonomy and self-determination. The new Act establishes a legislative framework for the registration of supporters, which will help embed supported decision-making across the aged care system.

116. The framework under the new Act aims to uphold the rights of older Australians to autonomy, the presumption of legal capacity and, in particular, the right to make decisions about their care, the quality of their lives and social participation.

117. From 1 July 2025, the Support at Home program commenced prioritising supported and independent ageing and benefiting 1.4 million older people.

118. In September 2023, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General agreed to work towards achieving greater consistency in state and territory enduring powers of attorney laws, which included publicly releasing a detailed consultation paper. This work is ongoing with Attorneys-General further considering the feedback since the close of consultation.

¹¹ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.55, 146.98-146.99, 151-152.

119. Australia is developing the second *National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2025-2035*, which will be informed by an evaluation of the first plan and its impact in driving responses to reduce and prevent the abuse of older Australians.

Participation of older persons

120. The Age Discrimination Commissioner and the AHRC have undertaken several projects to promote the benefits of multigenerational workforces, including developing a training module for managers on the rights of older workers, and supporting research over multiple years to explore employer attitudes and organisations' strategies to recruit and retain older workers over multiple years.

I. Sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status¹²

Health and wellbeing

121. The 10-year *National Action Plan for the Health and Wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ People*, released in December 2024, sets out an ambitious plan to improve the care and support LGBTIQ+ people receive and deliver better physical and mental health outcomes across the community. The release of the Action Plan was accompanied by a \$15.5 million investment to start systemwide improvements to give LGBTIQ+ people access to safe, appropriate and stigma-free health and wellbeing care.

122. In January 2025, the Australian Government tasked the National Health and Medical Research Council to undertake a review of the *Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines for Trans and Gender Diverse Children and Adolescents*, and to develop new national guidelines.

Anti-discrimination

123. Legal protections under the SDA are complemented by the *Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender*, which recognise that individuals may identify as a gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth, or many not identify as exclusively male or female, and this should be reflected in records held by the government. The guidelines also standardise the evidence required for a person to change their sex/gender in personal records held by the Australian Government departments and agencies.

124. The *Australian Bureau of Statistics' Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables 2020* can be used by government, academic and private sector organisations in their statistical collections to improve the comparability

¹² [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.102-103

and quality of data. The ABS Standard was informed by the Guidelines, but has incorporated more recent developments to appropriate terminology and language.

J. Modern slavery, human trafficking and business and human rights¹³

125. Australia comprehensively criminalises trafficking in persons, slavery and slavery-like practices collectively referred to as ‘modern slavery’, in the Criminal Code.

126. Australia engages bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally to address modern slavery and its drivers including through International advocacy at multilateral UN forums, Australia’s role as Co-Chair (with Indonesia) of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime and Targeted investments such as the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking program TRIANGLE in ASEAN and the UNODC Pacific Islands Transnational Organized Crime Programme; and the delivery of capacity-building at regional and country levels.

127. In June 2023, Australia was appointed to the Asia and Pacific regional government member seat (2023-2026) in Alliance 8.7’s Global Coordinating Group.

128. In August 2023, the Government published the findings report of its targeted review of modern slavery offences in the Criminal Code. The Government has agreed to develop potential legislative reforms that respond to key findings from the targeted review, and has commenced targeted consultations around streamlining and simplifying offences and enhancing guidance to practitioners.

129. The *National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020–25* (National Action Plan) provides the strategic framework for Australia’s whole-of-government response to modern slavery. The National Action Plan commits to 46 action items. Twenty-nine of the 46 action items have been completed, and the remaining 17 are on track for implementation.

130. The *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth) (Modern Slavery Act) provides a transparency framework that aims to drive business and government action to assess and address modern slavery risks in global supply chains and operations.

131. In May 2023, the Government tabled a report from the independent statutory review of the Modern Slavery Act, which was informed by an extensive public consultation process. In December 2024, the Australian Government released its response to the review, which agreed (in full, in part, or in principle) to 25 of the 30 recommendations and noted 5 recommendations.

¹³ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.69, 146.184-194. [Pledge submitted by Australia to the Human Rights 75 Secretariat December 2023](#), pledge number 1.

132. In December 2024, the inaugural Australian Anti-Slavery Commissioner commenced their 5-year term. The Commissioner was appointed through a merit-based selection process. The Commissioner is an independent statutory office holder established under the Modern Slavery Act, who will support victims and survivors, raise community awareness and help business address the risk of modern slavery practices in their operations and supply chains.

Support services for victims of human trafficking

133. The Australian Government committed \$24.3 million over four years (from 2023-24) to enhance the support provided to victims and survivors. The Support for Trafficked People Program (STPP) supports victims and survivors in meeting their safety, security, health and well-being needs and helps develop options for life after victims and survivors leave the program.

134. As part of the enhancements to the STPP, the Australian Government established the Additional Referral Pathway (ARP) pilot on 23 July 2024. The ARP pilot consists of a number of non-government organisations led by The Salvation Army acting in a consortia. The ARP gives eligible victims and survivors of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices who do not wish to, or may be reluctant to, engage with law enforcement an additional pathway where they may feel more comfortable coming forward to test their eligibility to access the STPP.

135. The Australian Government also committed \$12.1 million to establish a national Forced Marriage Specialist Support Program which commenced in January 2025, and provides individualised needs-based prevention and early intervention support to those at risk of, or who have experienced, forced marriage.

Activities of Australian companies

136. The Australian Government expects businesses to respect human rights and act in accordance with the principles and standards set out in various international (non-legal) normative frameworks including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct (OECD Guidelines). These frameworks also promote the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour.

137. The Australian National Contact Point is responsible for promoting the OECD Guidelines and provides provide conciliation services to resolve complaints against multinational enterprises.

K. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers¹⁴

138. Since Australia's third UPR, the Australian Government has progressed measures to address the exploitation of temporary migrant workers, including:

- a. Significant amendments to the Fair Work Act to criminalise wage theft and make it explicit that migrant workers in Australia are entitled to the benefit of the Act regardless of migration status.
- b. Measures under the *Migration Amendment (Strengthening Employer Compliance) Act 2024*, to establish new criminal offences and civil penalty provisions for using a person's migration status to exploit them in the workplace.
- c. A new criminal offence for intentional wage theft and an increase of civil penalties for breaches of underpayment. In addition, the Government has committed \$32.4 million over four years to criminalise wage theft, including funding for the Fair Work Ombudsman and the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.
- d. A Workplace Justice visa pilot, to enable migrant workers who have been exploited while working in Australia to extend their stay for a short period to effectively pursue workplace claims.

Supports for refugees and asylum seekers

139. Australia's Humanitarian Program is set at 20,000 places annually. The Australian Government has a range of programs to provide support for the settlement of humanitarian refugees including through:

- a. The Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) which provides support to humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders integrate into Australian life.
 - i. From July 2026, the new Humanitarian Integration and Settlement Program will replace the HSP and embed better practice settlement principles supporting client-centric, strengths and self-agency service models.
- b. The Community Refugee Integration and Settlement Pilot (CRISP) where refugee visa holders receive settlement support directly from trained community groups.
 - ii. In 2026, CRISP will become a permanent feature of Australia's Humanitarian Program.

Reducing barriers to labour markets

¹⁴ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.54, 146.94, 146.96, 146.107, 146.206, 146.295-297, 146.299-303, 146.307, 146.314, 146.316-323, 146.329-330, 146.339;

140. The Australian Government has a significant focus on the creation of jobs and pathways to employment and self-employment for refugees through initiatives that create job opportunities and, provide support to refugees who seek to be self-employed.

Access to health care

141. Refugees and humanitarian entrants have unique experiences which may impact their health outcomes. The Australian Government has key strategies such as the Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma which gives specialised support to people who survived trauma and torture before moving to Australia on humanitarian grounds.

Conditions of Immigration detention

142. All persons held in immigration detention facilities are treated in accordance with human rights standards. The Australian Government ensures that all detainees have access to appropriately trained and experienced services providers, including; health services, educational programs, cultural, recreational and sporting activities, computer facilities, dietary and cultural requirements and living quarters.

International obligations to refugees including non-refoulment

143. The Australian Government has committed to resolving the status of Temporary Protection Visa and Safe Haven Enterprise Visa holders onto a permanent visa. In addition, greater weight is now being given to the strength, nature and duration of ties with Australia, including during a person's formative years, in deciding whether to refuse or cancel a person's visa on character grounds.

144. To support the transition of Resolution of Status visas, the Australian Government has committed \$9.4 million to facilitate the provision of free specialist refugee and immigration legal services, administered via the Australian Red Cross.

L. Climate change and disasters¹⁵

145. Australia is party to the *Paris Agreement* and is taking the practical actions needed to reduce emissions. In 2022, the Australian Government legislated emission reduction targets of 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

146. In 2022, as part of Australia's Nationally Determined Contribution to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC), the Australian Parliament passed the *Climate Change Act 2022* (Cth) (Climate Change Act). Currently, Australia is one of 33 parties to the UNFCCC that have legislated a net zero target. This includes 32 individual nations plus 14 nations as part of the EU legislation. The Climate Change Act outlines

¹⁵ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras. 146.115-117.

Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of a 43 per cent reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

147. The Australian Government is currently developing Australia's Net Zero Plan which will set out the key actions Australia needs to take over the next 25 years to decarbonise its economy. The development of the Net Zero Plan will support Australia's 2035 emission reduction target, which will be set in 2025.

Building climate resilience

148. The *National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021-2025* positions Australia to better anticipate, manage and adapt our changing climate. To enable more effective adaptation across Australia the Strategy contains three objectives to:

- a. drive investment and action through collaboration
- b. improve climate information services
- c. assess progress and improve over time.

149. The strategy is underpinned and guided by the principle to support those who are vulnerable to climate-related impacts.

150. *The Second National Plan to implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework* outlines 24 actions designed to provide a pathway for all sectors of society to actively participate in reducing risk and achieves Australia's 2030 disaster risk reduction goals. The Plan also commits to building spaces for inclusive and diverse community representations to ensure equity and inclusion across the system.

M. Criminal justice and Counter-Terrorism¹⁶

151. In Australia, states and territories are primarily responsible for criminal law and justice matters. Since Australia's third UPR, Australian jurisdictions have been investing in new fit-for-purpose prisons, rehabilitation and reintegration programs to reduce recidivism, diversionary programs and non-custodial measures to reduce prison populations, and programs to reduce the over-representation of First Nations people in prisons.

152. For further information see Part IV.D Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Addressing the needs of women in the prison system

153. Australia considers it imperative that the rights of women and girls in detention are protected and they have equal access to all programs and support services. State and territory governments have been investing in new fit for purpose prisons.

¹⁶ [A/HRC/47/8](#), paras 146.121-122, 146.125, 146.138-139, 146.181, 146.205-206, 146.217, 146.236, 146.249, 251, 146.342-343

154. Australia recognises the importance of ensuring women and girls are accommodated separately to males and boys in detention centres.

Education and training for law enforcement officials

155. All Australian jurisdictions provide comprehensive training to ensure appropriate care of detainees, with additional specific training provided to support staff in youth justice facilities.

156. Since Australia's third UPR, the Australian Federal Police delivered the National Interviewing Vulnerable Persons Program, to develop investigator skillsets and which is delivered under a trauma informed approach, with an emphasis placed on the well-being of all relevant parties involved in the judicial process.

Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT)

157. Australia has adopted a cooperative network model of OPCAT implementation, where independent bodies (known as National Preventive Mechanisms or NPMs) are nominated at the Commonwealth, state and territory level.

158. To support this model, the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman is Australia's NPM Coordinator and has continued to undertake a range of activities during this UPR cycle to advance OPCAT implementation. This includes supporting coordination, reporting, training, information sharing and collaboration among Commonwealth, state and territory NPMs. Progress has also been made at the state and territory level to nominate NPMs and enact legislation to support visits to Australia by the UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture, contributing to Australia's progressive implementation of OPCAT.

Counterterrorism

159. In September 2023, the Australian Parliament passed laws related to Australia's dedicated intelligence oversight body, the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security to bolster the ability of the Inspector-General to provide effective oversight of relevant intelligence and security agencies and include changes to clarify that whistle-blowers are able to fully disclose classified information to the Inspector-General without breaching secrecy or unauthorised disclosure offences.

160. On 24 November 2023, the Australian Parliament passed the *Counter-Terrorism and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023* (Cth), which enhanced safeguards and oversight mechanisms for a range of counterterrorism powers, including by introducing additional considerations for decision-makers, enhanced reporting requirements, and new notification requirements.

V. New and emerging issues

[PLACEHOLDER – INPUT WILL BE INFORMED BY FEEDBACK RECEIVED THROUGH THE CONSULTATION PROCESS]

