

Human Rights Council – 38th Session

General Debate on Item 4
27 June 2018

Australian Statement

Australia calls on all states considered under Item 4 to commit to realising the human rights of their people, thereby safeguarding global stability and security.

Australia remains deeply concerned about continued human rights violations and abuses, the use of chemical weapons, and denial of humanitarian access to areas of need in **Syria**. The focus needs to be on reaching a political solution to end armed conflict that disproportionately affects civilians.

The human rights situation in the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** remains grave. We call on the DPRK Government to address human rights violations reported by the Commission of Inquiry in 2014, to demonstrate its prioritisation of the welfare of its population.

Australia is deeply troubled by the escalating crisis in **Venezuela** and the breakdown of democratic institutions. We condemn the widespread violation of human rights, including allegations of torture and crackdowns on political dissent. We, like others, do not recognise the outcome of the illegitimate May elections.

We are gravely concerned by the ongoing human rights crisis and political situation in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**. We call on the Government to uphold its population's civil and political rights.

Australia is disturbed by gross violations of human rights in **South Sudan**, including the targeting of civilians and perpetration of horrific sexual violence by armed groups and government forces. Impunity amongst political and military leaders cannot be tolerated.

Australia remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation in **Yemen**. Peace through a political solution is needed to fully address the suffering of the Yemeni people. Australia emphasises the need for parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law, minimise civilian hardship and facilitate humanitarian access.

Australia will deliver separate statements during Item 4 consideration of Belarus, Burundi, Eritrea, Myanmar and Syria.

293 Words [275 word limit]