

Human Rights Council – 38th Session

Item 10: Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on the Central African Republic

4 July 2018

Australian Statement

We thank the Independent Expert on the Central African Republic for her oral update.

Australia welcomes the appointment of a Special Criminal Court Prosecutor and the establishment of a National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Central African Republic.

Australia is encouraged by the establishment of a network for women's leadership, and calls on the Government to increase the participation of women in the national reconciliation process and all peace and security initiatives.

However, we are very concerned by the resurgence of widespread violence and worsening human rights situation in the Central African Republic. We are particularly concerned by the significant increase in acts of sexual violence towards women and girls. Australia urges government authorities make every effort to protect these groups from violence.

We note sectarian violence in the Central African Republic continues as religiously-affiliated armed groups and so-called "self-defence" militia refuse to join the national reconciliation process. Australia notes with concern the unprecedented levels of hate speech against the country's Muslim population and UN peacekeepers.

We call on the Government to uphold its population's civil and political rights, and urge that perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law are brought to justice.

We ask the independent expert what could be done to facilitate greater participation of women in the national reconciliation process.

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