

Human Rights Council – 38th Session

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea

26 June 2018

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her presentation and for her final report on the situation of human rights in Eritrea. We also thank the Special Rapporteur for her service.

At the outset, we welcome Eritrea's decision to send a delegation to Ethiopia to discuss resolving boundary issues. We urge timely progress in this matter as a catalyst for normalising relations with Ethiopia, and ceasing open-ended military service programmes.

We also welcome the Government of Eritrea's progress in engaging on business and human rights as a component of its economic development, and encourage it to do so within regulatory structures that are transparent, participatory and non-discriminatory. We welcome reports that journalists have been able to enter Eritrea.

Australia regrets the Government of Eritrea's lack of cooperation with the Special Rapporteur, and we repeat our previous calls on the Government to implement the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry's May 2016 report. We note the Special Rapporteur's conclusion that the human rights situation in Eritrea remains complex and that efforts are required to improve institutions, respect rule of law, and to implement meaningful reforms.

With a view to improving the situation on the ground, we would welcome more information from the Special Rapporteur on the concrete benchmarks to support tangible progress set out in her report.

219 Words