**Human Rights Council – 39th Session**

**Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner’s oral report on Ukraine**

**25 September 2018**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the High Commissioner for her oral update on the human rights situation in Ukraine. Ongoing fighting in eastern Ukraine has a devastating impact on the safety civilians and is conducive to persistent human rights abuses throughout Ukraine. We steadfastly support Ukraine’s territorial integrity and call on all parties to implement their Minsk 2 obligations as the only agreed basis for resolving the crisis.

We are gravely concerned by OHCHR’s findings that authorities in occupied Crimea systematically fail to guarantee fair and impartial justice and human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of religion or belief. We deplore the reported use of torture, enforced disappearances, and sexual violence by those occupying authorities. We urge the illegitimate authorities in Crimea to cease these practices and guarantee the human rights of all citizens in Crimea.

We are concerned by the increased scale and severity of threats and violence against Roma and LGBTI groups throughout Ukraine. We call on the Ukrainian government to combat discrimination against these groups and ensure the perpetrators of such attacks are brought to justice. We are also concerned by increasing legal constraints on the legitimate activities of journalists and non-government organisations in Ukraine and call on the Ukrainian government to enable a safe environment for these groups.

Australia supports the OHCHR, and relevant special procedure mandate holders continuing to report on the situation in Ukraine and would welcome the High Commissioner’s views on options for ensuring accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses in Ukraine.

***249 Words***