**Human Rights Council – 39th Session**

**Interactive Dialogue on Yemen**

**25 September 2018**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the High Commissioner on behalf of the Group of Eminent Experts for their report.

Australia is deeply concerned by the alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We note the report concludes that some acts may amount to international crimes.

The humanitarian consequences of the conflict in Yemen are devastating. Reports of sexual violence against men, women and children is alarming. We also condemn the alleged recruitment or use of children – some reportedly as young as eight –for military purposes.

Continued hostilities have limited the distribution of food, fuel and medicines and crippled basic services. We urge all parties to allow unimpeded humanitarian assistance to all areas of Yemen.

Australia is disappointed that UN-mediated talks scheduled in Geneva earlier this month did not take place. We call on all parties to the conflict to engage constructively to reach a lasting political settlement.

We agree that a comprehensive approach to accountability is required. Such processes contribute to the fight against impunity, the reinstatement of the rule of law and, ultimately, reconciliation.

Consequently, Australia supports the extension of the mandate of the Group of Eminent Experts to further document human rights violations and abuses in Yemen.

Australia is interested to hear how the Group of Eminent Experts would use an extended mandate to further investigate alleged breaches of international law?

***226* Words**