

Human Rights Council – 40th Session

**High Level Panel on Human Rights Mainstreaming
25 February 2019**

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the Panellists for their presentations. We are pleased to participate in this discussion, a particularly relevant one in this, the 100th year of multilateralism in Geneva.

Human rights are an integral part of the multilateral system and the rules-based international order. As the international community has recognised many times, there can be no sustainable development, nor any sustained peace, without human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action and the core human rights treaties have woven human rights principles into the fabric of the United Nations and the multilateral system.

We should be rightly proud of these achievements.

However, we must not be blind to the challenges and threats presented by States ignoring their international human rights obligations, and unwillingness to be held to account.

Attempts to shut down debate, to control the flow of information or to attack and undermine the credibility and independence of international institutions like the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights must be opposed.

Though we may not always agree with everything these institutions say, the hallmark of multilateralism's success is the breadth and richness of debate it encourages.

Australia remains committed to a strong multilateral human rights system. We recognise that peace and security, human rights and development are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and ask the panellists how the multilateral human rights agenda can be better connected with these other pillars of the multilateral system?