

Human Rights Council – 40th Session

Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner on Sri Lanka

20 March 2019

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the High Commissioner for her comprehensive report on Sri Lanka.

We commend Sri Lanka for continuing to constructively engage with UN human rights processes, and for its commitment to implementing Resolution 30/1.

We welcome Sri Lanka's co-sponsorship of Resolution 40/1 as a positive demonstration of this commitment, and encourage Sri Lanka to deliver its transitional justice agenda in a timely and effective way.

We recognise Sri Lanka's progress towards establishing credible transitional justice mechanisms and in returning military occupied land. In particular, we welcome the progress made by Office of Missing Persons Commissioners in the Office's first year of operation. We also welcome steps taken to establish an Office of Reparations, and hope to see Commissioners appointed and the Office operationalised soon. We encourage progress towards counter-terrorism legislation in line with international standards.

Australia supports the extension of the process established by Resolution 30/1, recognising that more needs to be done to promote truth-seeking, accountability, justice and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

We endorse the High Commissioner's call for Sri Lanka to demonstrate sustained commitment and leadership to move its reconciliation and accountability agenda forward.

Reconciliation in accordance with democratic principles and freedoms is in Sri Lanka's national interest, and is crucial to its long-term peace and prosperity.

Australia will continue to offer practical support to our Indian Ocean neighbour.

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