

Human Rights Council – 41st Session

Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women  
Panel 1: Violence against women in the world of work

27 June 2019

Australian Statement

We thank the panel members for their presentations.

Australia condemns all forms of violence against women and is committed to dismantling the structural inequalities and social norms that underpin gender-based violence.

We welcome the focus of today's discussion. Violence in the workplace has devastating consequences and impacts women's ability to work. It can result in loss of livelihood, silencing of women's voices and limiting of their contributions in the workplace. Effects are more severe for women experiencing intersectional disadvantage. There is a strong business case to support women's participation in the workforce.

Australia welcomes the recent adoption of the International Labour Organization's standard on Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, and notes the overwhelming majority support that the Convention and Recommendation received. This signifies an important step towards achieving the elimination of violence against women universally.

As States, we have the responsibility to protect workers from violence, and to ensure perpetrators are held to account. Workplaces should be places of safety for people experiencing violence at home, a factor which can impact on women's ability to work and increase their vulnerability to violence in the workplace.

In December 2018, Australia legislated leave entitlements to help workers deal with the impacts of family and domestic violence. This legislation supports people to retain their employment and financial independence at a critical time.

Preventative measures are important. We ask the panel for its views on the role of employers in breaking the cycle of violence, for example by supporting perpetrators of violence to access rehabilitative services.

*[256 words]*