

Human Rights Council – 41st Session

Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity and the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

Australian Statement

24 June 2019

Australia thanks the mandate holders for their presentations and reiterates its support for their important mandates.

We appreciate the broad consultation undertaken by the **Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**, and welcome his report. The Australian Government believes all individuals are entitled to respect, dignity, and the opportunity to participate in society and receive the protection of the law regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We welcome the Independent Expert's recognition of the crucial role played by civil society, human rights defenders and national human rights institutions in providing an evidence base for public policy. Civil society and governments can work together to increase awareness of the importance of collecting and using data on sexual orientation and gender identity to challenge preconceptions and ensure more effective protections.

Noting the recommendation on facilitating safe spaces (para 82), could the Independent Expert elaborate on the role national human rights institutions could play to facilitate engagement and data collection.

Australia welcomes the focus of the **Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers** on the exercise of the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly by judges and prosecutors, both offline and online.

Could the Special Rapporteur share some best practice examples of social media guidelines that ensure judges and prosecutors' rights are protected while balancing their special duties and responsibilities as public servants.

228 Words [limit 220 words]