

Human Rights Council – 42nd session

Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on the Sudan

25 September 2019

Australian Statement

Australia welcomes the report of the Independent Expert and the oral update covering the landmark events of July, August and September.

Australia commends the parties in Sudan for signing the Constitutional Declaration, along with the formation of the Sovereign Council and appointment of a new Cabinet to enable a transition towards civilian rule and democracy. We acknowledge the important role of the African Union and Ethiopia in facilitating agreement between the parties. We welcome the commitment in the Constitutional Declaration to comprehensive peace in all conflict areas and the new Government's outreach to armed opposition groups.

We also welcome the commitment of the Government of Sudan to continue cooperation with the Independent Expert and welcome plans to establish a fully mandated OHCHR country office.

Australia supports an independent, transparent and thorough investigation into allegations of human rights violations, including rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, against peaceful protestors since December 2018. Full accountability is paramount.

We call on the new Government to provide a safe and enabling environment for civil society, human rights defenders and the media.

Australia urges the Government to conduct legal reforms that guarantee women's rights and to ensure their meaningful participation at all levels of the peace process and government. We welcome the announcement yesterday by Sudan's Minister of Justice that Sudan plans to sign the CEDAW.

We ask the Independent Expert how the international community can support efforts to reach lasting peace in Sudan, particularly in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States?

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