

Human Rights Council – 43<sup>rd</sup> session

Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral report on Ukraine

17 June 2020

Australian Statement

Australia continues to value the High Commissioner's oral update on the human rights situation in Ukraine and the opportunity to discuss these findings.

Australia welcomes the 9 December Normandy Format summit talks, during which all parties agreed to the improvement of humanitarian and security conditions to create a safe environment for local elections in eastern Ukraine. We look forward to the talks resuming when safe to do so.

Australia strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and we encourage all parties to the conflict to resolve outstanding issues in good faith.

Australia welcomes the release of 76 Ukrainians on 29 December 2019 and a further 20 Ukrainians on 16 April 2020.

However, we remain concerned at consistent reports of ongoing human rights violations and abuses in Crimea and eastern Ukraine and stalled progress following the December Normandy Format talks. The situation is exacerbated by COVID-19 and the impact falls disproportionately on vulnerable groups.

We again call on the Russian Federation to use its influence to facilitate immediate and unimpeded access to Crimea and eastern Ukraine by the OHCHR and other international organisations responsible for reporting on the human rights situation in Ukraine.

**192 Words**