

Human Rights Council – 44th session

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea

30 June 2020

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her update. We strongly endorse the mandate of the Special Rapporteur and as a core group member of the associated resolution, we will be supporting its renewal this session.

We repeat our calls on the Eritrean Government to cooperate with the mandate - it is incumbent on Council members to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and to fully cooperate with the Council.

While we note some positive steps in justice system and police reform, we remain concerned by reports of torture and arbitrary and indefinite detention in Eritrea. We call on the Government of Eritrea to implement comprehensive reforms to ensure the criminal justice system is transparent, fair and equitable.

Australia is troubled by the high number of women and girls exposed to human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Eritrea. We urge the Eritrean Government to strengthen efforts to curb human trafficking and to protect the rights of victims, including by building on its national action plan and steering committee to address gender-based violence.

We remain concerned by reports of prolonged and compulsory national service, particularly amongst children. Australia asks the Special Rapporteur how the international community and the Council can assist Eritrea in meeting the benchmarks outlined in your report?

214 words