**Human Rights Council – 45th session**

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

**2 October 2020**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report and welcomes Cambodia's ongoing engagement with the Special Rapporteur.

We acknowledge Cambodia’s efforts to contain COVID-19, and have been pleased to partner with Cambodia on its response and recovery.

We are concerned by recent arrests of political, human rights and environmental activists, and call on Cambodia to respect and protect all citizens’ rights to freedom of expression and assembly as guaranteed under Cambodia’s constitution and laws. We remain concerned not all political parties, civil society and media are able to operate freely. We call on Cambodia to resolve Kem Sokha’s case expeditiously, transparently and in accordance with procedural fairness.

We recommend Cambodia review all laws, existing and under development, including the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations, to ensure consistency with Cambodia’s constitution and the international human rights standards to which Cambodia has subscribed.

Australia seeks the Special Rapporteur’s views on how the Council can encourage Cambodia to address restrictions on political freedoms and promote long-term stability based on an open political environment. We remain committed to working constructively with Cambodia on these issues.

***182* Words**