**Human Rights Council – 45th session**

**Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Sudan**

**2 October 2020**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the Independent Expert on Sudan for the update. We note that the establishment of a fully mandated OHCHR country office is a precondition for the termination of the mandate of the Independent Expert and welcome progress made between Sudan and the OHCHR on this front.

Australia commends Sudan’s efforts to resolve longstanding internal conflicts by addressing its causes and seeking political solutions. We also note recent peace agreements and commitments to peace talks between the Government and armed rebel groups. We urge all parties to pursue a permanent cessation of hostilities, and to ensure the promotion and protection of all human rights.

We welcome progress on the active participation of women at all levels of the peace process and in government, including the appointment of two female governors for the first time. However, we share the report’s concerns that in conflict-affected regions, women are deprived of equal rights and continue to face sexual and gender-based violence.

Australia asks the Independent Expert what needs to be done to ensure women’s full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in Sudan’s reform processes, particularly in conflict-affected regions?