



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

E-mail australia@un.int

150 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 www.AustraliaUN.org

**UNGA Third Committee
Item 72(c): Promotion and protection of human rights:
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation
of human rights in Myanmar**

Intervention for 22 October 2019

- Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report.
- Australia remains gravely concerned by the situation in Rakhine State, as reported by the Special Rapporteur.
- Ongoing clashes among ethnic armed groups and the Myanmar military, including the use of heavy artillery fire in civilian areas, remain a concern. We call on all parties to cease hostilities, protect civilians, and return to meaningful dialogue.
- We are disturbed by the large number of people displaced by conflict in Rakhine State and elsewhere in Myanmar, and reiterate our calls for full and effective access for humanitarian agencies to deliver much-needed assistance.
- We urge Myanmar to create conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of displaced people to Rakhine State, including through implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State.
- We welcome the Myanmar Parliament's agreement to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and encourage Myanmar to continue its

efforts towards signing the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

- Australia will continue to support Myanmar's efforts toward a more democratic system, a cornerstone of which is freedom of expression.
- We welcome the withdrawal of the lawsuit against Reverend Samson but note that many other journalists, artists and activists continue to face charges for undertaking activities central to their work.
- We urge Myanmar to ensure that its legislative framework allows for a safe and enabling environment for civil society, journalists and lawyers.
- Australia would be interested to hear from the Special Rapporteur how regional partners can best help progress the peace process and support Myanmar's democratic transition.

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