

Human Rights Council – 40th Session

General Debate on Item 4
12 March 2019

Australian Statement

Australia deplores the continuing widespread human rights violations and abuses in **Syria**, including reports of arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances and torture in areas that have been returned to regime control. We note the importance of ensuring the safe, dignified and voluntary return of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons.

Australia remains gravely concerned by the human rights situation in the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**. We urge the DPRK to halt human rights abuses and engage constructively with UN processes to advance peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

Australia remains concerned by the situation in **Xinjiang**, including reports of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention and restrictions on freedom of movement.

We call on the new government of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** to take urgent action to improve human rights, democracy and rule of law, including by safeguarding media freedoms and ensuring accountability for violations committed during the electoral period.

Australia calls for a return to democracy in **Venezuela**, without delay. We urge all parties to work constructively towards a peaceful resolution, which upholds human rights, the rule of law, such that Venezuelans no longer need to flee their own country.

We are deeply concerned at the reported deaths of over 300 people and ongoing detention of hundreds more resulting from the **Nicaraguan** Government's suppression of protests. We urge the Government maintain a genuine dialogue with opposition and international representatives towards a solution.

Australia urges an end to the conflict in **Yemen**. We are concerned about obstacles to humanitarian access. We call on all parties to implement the Stockholm Agreement and facilitate delivery of food, fuel and medicines to all Yemenis.

We addressed situations of deep concern during the separate interactive dialogues on **Myanmar, DPRK, Eritrea, South Sudan, Syria and Burundi**.

291 Words