

Human Rights Council – 42<sup>nd</sup> Session

Item 2 – General Debate and Presentation of the report of the  
International Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar

10 September 2019

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the High Commissioner for her update.

We will continue to use our platform as a member of the HRC to promote Australian values – including democracy, the rule of law, individual freedom and the right of all to dignity and respect.

In this spirit, we call on HRC members to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, and to fully cooperate with the Council.

By introducing an incoming members' pledge, Australia has taken the lead in encouraging all countries to engage with the HRC in a spirit of self-reflection. Just this week, Australia will appear before two treaty bodies.

Australia is disappointed that 15 members – almost one-third – have not issued a standing invitation to Special Procedures Mandate Holders and we call on all members to do so.

Australia is deeply concerned by the lack of commitment to human rights demonstrated by some members. This includes the carrying out of extra-judicial killings, and other targeting of civil society and opposition figures; attacks on the independence of judges and lawyers; and violent repression of peaceful protest. We are also deeply concerned by the high rates of violence against women. Australia urges all HRC members to strive to improve their human rights records, including through engagement with the HRC and its mechanisms.

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Australia also thanks the **International Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar** for its report on the progress and priorities of its important work.

Accountability for international crimes is a crucial part of any long-term and durable solution to the crisis in Myanmar. Continued impunity would likely lead to further violence and deter those displaced from returning to their homes.

Australia has strongly supported the establishment of the Mechanism, and we commend the UN's expeditious efforts to put in place arrangements for its operationalisation.

We urge Myanmar to cooperate with the Mechanism as it carries out its mandate.

**[315 words]**