

Human Rights Council – 37th Session

Interactive Dialogue with the High Commissioner for Human Rights
8 March 2018

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the High Commissioner for his typically thorough and eloquent report.

Australia regrets that international human rights law continues to be breached. We are particularly concerned that the death penalty in **Saudi Arabia** and **Iran** continues to be applied to persons who were juveniles at the time of the offence. We condemn the reported use of torture and the mistreatment of detainees in **Egypt**. We remain deeply concerned about ongoing reports of extra-judicial killings associated with the so-called 'war on drugs' in the **Philippines**.

Australia is gravely concerned at continued attacks on freedom of expression across the world. At least 260 journalists were in prison at the end of 2017 for simply doing their job. We condemn in the strongest terms ongoing human rights violations in **Venezuela**, including excessive use of force by state security services, arbitrary detention of political opponents and the targeting of protestors. We are concerned about the imprisonment and mistreatment of peaceful protestors in **Bahrain**.

It is vitally important that states cooperate with United Nations mechanisms, bearing in mind the fundamental importance of all three pillars of the UN system: peace and security, human rights, and development.

We urge all states to respect the Council's processes. The work of the Council should not be political. We are not here to serve national agendas. We are here to discharge the serious duty of safeguarding the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family.