

Human Rights Council – 38th Session

Clustered Interactive Dialogue

Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice &
Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

20 June 2018

Australian Statement

Australia thanks the Working Group for its report. We call on States to heed its recommendation “that there should be no compromise or tolerance for human rights violations or rollback of international human rights standards”.

States should protect freedom of religion, promote cultural traditions, and acknowledge the importance of the family unit. However, these considerations should not be used to justify the denial of women’s equal human rights, decision-making or bodily autonomy.

We agree with the Working Group’s finding that women’s economic empowerment and full inclusion in sustainable development is unachievable if the global community fails to eliminate discrimination against women “in family, cultural and sexual and reproductive rights”.

We also agree that National Human Rights Institutions are well placed to help States bridge the gap between domestic human rights situations and international human rights mechanisms. Their independent participation in international human rights discussions, including the Commission on the Status of Women, must be supported.

Australia also notes the Special Rapporteur’s report. Australia is committed to ensuring trafficked people receive appropriate care and support. Australia’s Support for Trafficked People Program provides comprehensive support and assistance to trafficked people in Australia, including individually tailored case management, financial assistance, medical care, counselling, support accessing safe accommodation and referral for legal and migration advice. Since 2004, over 350 victims have received support.

219 words