

Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (L.9)

General Comment: Permanent Representative to the UN, Sally Mansfield

Australia is a strong advocate for the elimination of female genital mutilation. We are pleased to be a co-sponsor of this resolution. We thank the African Group, and in particular Burkina Faso, for the leadership they have demonstrated by once again presenting a resolution on what is a vitally important human rights issue.

It is the responsibility of this Council to uphold the human rights of women and girls and there is no denying the life-long and severe negative impact female genital mutilation can have on rights to health, bodily autonomy and development of one's mental and physical abilities.

We were particularly pleased to see this resolution's stronger text. Its emphasis on gender equality, stronger focus on legal protections, access to justice and prosecution, as well as the progress that has been made in strengthening this resolution as a whole. We will continue to strive towards a future free from all forms of female genital mutilation.

We look forward to supporting continued work in this regard, with a view to ensuring that women and girls' sexual and reproductive rights are fully recognised and best practice guidance from the World Health Organization is fully reflected.