**HRC39**

**Joint Statement**

**Annual Discussion on integration of a gender perspective**

September 24, 2018

I have the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of Australia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and my own country, Canada.

We welcome this important discussion on the use of gender-sensitive methodologies and the integration of a gender perspective into human rights investigative mechanisms.

In recent years, UN commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions have increasingly sought to integrate a gender perspective into their work, in particular through the presence of gender advisors dedicated to ensuring the gender sensitivity of the investigation mechanism and by collecting evidence of sexual and gender-based violence.

While this is to be commended, there is much more work to be done by COIs, FFMs and other investigative mechanisms in fully integrating a gender perspective throughout investigations.

First, commissioners and experts should gather contextual information to uncover and analyze the root causes of gender-based human rights violations and abuses in conflict settings, including historical and structural gender inequalities and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Second, investigators should systematically collect data disaggregated by gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability and other identifying characteristics to determine the degree to which all human rights – including sexual and reproductive health and rights – of various subgroups of individuals are respected, protected and fulfilled in times of conflict.

Third, meeting with women human rights defenders and civil society organizations, including feminist networks and LGBTI persons, should be built into the working methods of human rights investigative mechanisms in order to capture diverse gender perspectives.

Fourth, recommendations on accountability measures should reflect the voices of women, girls and all individuals who experience gender-based human rights violations and abuses in conflict.

The comprehensive integration of a gender perspective into the mandates of COIs, FFMs and other human rights investigative mechanisms is not only an important – but truly an essential – step towards achieving gender equality.