

HRC38 Readout

The 38th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC38) was another busy one for Australia. We engaged on 21 resolutions, co-sponsoring 14 of them. We delivered 26 national statements, joined 20 joint statements, and participated in 41 side events.

Gender equality and women's rights, a key Australian priority, featured prominently. Australia worked to strengthen language on the 'discrimination against women' and 'violence against women' resolutions, with an emphasis on women's economic empowerment and violence in the online space. The Ambassador for Women and Girls, Dr Sharman Stone guided discussions on women's participation in building resilience in small island developing states. Leading Australia's efforts to amplify the voices of the Pacific in the HRC's work, Dr Stone delivered a statement on behalf of 15 Pacific countries on advancing women's rights in our region.

Australia led a joint statement on the Plurality of Families and protecting individual rights, which was joined by 28 states.

Freedom of expression, association and assembly were another key focus of HRC38. Australia co-sponsored resolutions on civil society space, peaceful protests and human rights on the internet.

On country situations, Australia co-sponsored resolutions on Syria, Belarus and Haiti. We supported joint statements on Cambodia, Venezuela and the Philippines. We delivered national statements on Belarus, Eritrea, Syria, Burundi, Myanmar, Haiti, DRC, Ukraine, CAR, the Rohingya and Georgia. Australia also delivered statements that covered human rights situations in multiple states during the general debates on items 2, 4 and 8.

The Foreign Minister's press release summarising the outcomes of the session can be found [here](#). Statements delivered by Australia during the session, including during action (voting), can be found [here](#).

Preparing for HRC39

Thank you to all those who provided analysis and views in advance of HRC38. Your inputs were greatly appreciated and informed our engagement during the session.

Preparations are now underway for HRC39, which will take place from 10-28 September. An early, best-guess forecast of resolutions we expect to be under consideration at this session and the HRC 2018 Program of Work are attached for your information. Please do not distribute the resolution forecast more broadly – it is only indicative at this time. **We would again welcome written submissions** from you to inform our engagement during the session. **Please email these to humanrights@dfat.gov.au by 24 August.**

Universal Periodic Review

Please note the 31st session of the Universal Periodic Review will take place in Geneva from 5-16 November. Information on which countries are due to appear can be found on the OHCHR website [here](#). **We would welcome submissions from civil society organisations with interests in the human rights contexts of particular countries.** Further information regarding the process and timelines for these submissions can be found [here](#).

Other events of interest

Ensuring individuals are able to enjoy the same human rights online as they enjoy offline is a complex challenge. DFAT was pleased to be a major project partner for the **Australian Human Rights Commission's Human Rights and Technology Conference** on 24 July, which brought together leaders in industry, government and civil society to create a blueprint for responsible innovation in the digital age.

Australian officials took part in the US '**Ministerial on Religious Freedom**' from 24-26 July in Washington DC. The Ministerial presented an opportunity for Australia and other States, civil society and the private sector to come together to discuss how we can all work together to advance the protection of freedom of religion or belief. The Foreign Minister's press release on the event can be found [here](#), and Australia's statement for the event can be found [here](#).

Preparations are well advanced for Australia's participation in **Leaving No One Behind: the Equal Rights Coalition Global Conference on LGBTI Human Rights and Inclusive Development**, which will take place in Vancouver on 7 August. The ERC fulfils an important role as an information sharing and consensus building mechanism on LGBTI human rights and concerning country situations. Australia is proud to be a member.

The **World Indigenous Business Forum (WIBF)** will take place from 9-11 October in Rotorua, New Zealand. Topics of discussion at the Forum will cover a range of issues, including: Indigenous Global Women in Business; Technology in the Indigenous World; Indigenous Entrepreneurship; Building Indigenous Communities through Business. More information is available at: <http://wibf.ca/>

Staying in touch

If you are aware of someone who would like to be on this mailing list, please ask them to email us at humanrights@dfat.gov.au. Please also feel free to email should you have any questions or concerns regarding this list.

Regards

DFAT Human Rights Team