

Mr President

In recent days this Council has sounded the alarm about chemical weapons attacks in Syria, the persecution of human rights defenders in Iran and families being burned alive in their homes in Myanmar.

The Australian Government has professed its concerns, yet right now it is imprisoning people for fleeing these very atrocities.

Our Government will never want to talk about it here at this Council. But as we speak there are 1800 innocent human beings - including 150 children – that the Australian Government has held in offshore camps for almost five years.

Time and time again this Council has warned our Government that its cruelty to refugees is unlawful and wrong.

And while our Government could give every single one of these people freedom and safety tomorrow, it is making the political choice not to.

Mr President, such deliberate and unprincipled cruelty by members of this Council gnaws away at the very foundations of universal human rights.

So, while the Australian Government will be hoping that this deep, dark stain on its human rights record will just be overlooked and forgotten, we urge this Council to ensure accountability.

Thank you.