HRC6 Resumed Session: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar

- Australia strongly supports the continued focus of the Human Rights Council on human rights in Burma
  - we thank the Special Rapporteur for his most recent report
  - which reinforces our grave concern at the Burmese regime's lack of respect for the fundamental human rights and freedoms which should be enjoyed by all its citizens.

- We are deeply saddened by the regime's persistent failure to heed the voice of its own people – and international opinion – and commit to the implementation of its international human rights obligations.

- Burma's recent dismissal of the August and September protests as 'trivial' is shocking
  - the regime's continuing campaign of violence and intimidation in response to the protests is well known to the world and confirmed in this report
  - those who have committed human rights abuses must be brought to account for their actions.

- We urge the regime to release all political prisoners immediately and unconditionally
  - as we have said many times before, the ongoing detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and over one thousand other political prisoners, many of them long-term, is totally unacceptable.

- It is imperative to recognise the protests as a clear call from the Burmese people for democratic change which cannot be ignored
  - in the absence of genuine political reform and national reconciliation in Burma, human rights cannot be guaranteed.

- In this regard, we note the Special Rapporteur's conclusion that the incidents of September were not an isolated episode
  - for decades the Burmese Government has denied the people their basic civil and political rights, restricted their freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly
  - Burma should use the opportunity provided by the UN Secretary General's good offices, and the role of his Special Adviser on Burma
  - and open a genuine dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and other opposition figures.

- The importance of strong, credible and sustained action by the international community, including through the Human Rights Council, cannot be overstated
  - Australia continues to support the Special Rapporteur's role and urges the Burmese Government to afford him full access and cooperation to enable him to fulfil it.

- Australia has co-sponsored the draft follow-up resolution on the human rights situation in Burma, which reaffirms the need for urgent implementation of the Special Rapporteur's recommendations and – crucially – provides for ongoing monitoring and reporting mechanisms