

## Human Rights Council – 43rd session

### Explanation of Vote

#### Item 7 22 June 2020

On Friday I expressed to this Council Australia's long-standing, consistent and principled opposition to biased and one-sided resolutions targeting Israel in multilateral forums.

Nowhere is institutional bias more apparent than in the Human Rights Council's agenda item 7, the only agenda item dedicated to a single country situation. The existence of Item 7, and the disproportionate focus on Israel it represents, damages the credibility of this Council. This is deeply regrettable.

The resolutions on Israel run under Item 7 do nothing to bring the parties together to achieve lasting peace and stability for Israelis and Palestinians, including resolving final status issues.

For these reasons, Australia will call the vote on this resolution and the two remaining resolutions considered under Item 7. Our vote against these resolutions represents a vote against the disproportionate focus that holds Israel to a higher degree of scrutiny than any other state.

Our vote against Item 7 should not be misconstrued in any way as a vote against appropriate and proportionate scrutiny of human rights abuses in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Australia will continue to raise human rights concerns with Israel and with the Palestinian Authority, but we will do so in a balanced way.

As we did at HRC40, in our national statement during the Item 2 general debate held on 27 February, Australia again urged Israel and the Palestinians to return to peace negotiations and refrain from any actions that undermine the prospects for peace. Australia remains a strong supporter of a two-state solution, in which Israel and a future Palestinian state co-exist in peace and security within internationally recognised borders.