**Human Rights Council – 44th Session**

Panel discussion on the impacts, opportunities and challenges of new and emerging digital technologies with regard to the promotion and protection of human rights

**8 July 2020**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the Advisory Committee and the Panel for their presentations.

Technological advances offer the potential to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights, and unique platforms to raise awareness of human rights issues and abuses.

For example, ensuring consistency with International Human Rights Law in the design, development and use of new and emerging digital technology can effect positive change.

In the area of AI, Australia considers there is utility in the development of ethical frameworks, derived from and consistent with international law, which provide guidance to governments and industry on responsible development of technology, to underpin that positive change.

Human rights and freedoms can also be impacted negatively by cyberspace and new and emerging digital technologies. We are concerned that countries around the world increasingly use cyberspace and new and emerging digital technologies to deliberately and unlawfully deny citizens’ human rights and freedoms and prevent participation in democratic processes.

Australia is committed to ensuring individuals are able to enjoy the same human rights and freedoms online as they do offline, and that cyberspace and new and emerging digital technologies are used to promote, protect and uphold human rights and freedoms.

We ask the panel to share some best practice examples of new and emerging digital technology policies which facilitate compliance with international human rights law?

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