**Human Rights Council – 44th session**

**Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, especially women and children**

**3 July 2020**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for her report and for her valuable work during the past six years.

While criminal justice is critical in tackling human trafficking, Australia agrees that a holistic approach is necessary to eradicate these often hidden crimes. The Australian Government is currently developing its next *International Strategy on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery 2020-2024*, which will build on the previous Strategy to provide a comprehensive framework for Australia’s active leadership - within our region and globally – in combating trafficking and modern slavery. The Strategy will identify effective ways to prevent exploitation, protect victims’ rights and reduce the risk of re-victimisation. It will aim to strengthen government, business and civil society partnerships to address exploitation in supply chains, and tackle corruption and illicit financing that enable human trafficking. Women, including survivors of trafficking, will be consulted in the design, to ensure the Strategy is gender and child sensitive.

Australia is contributing to regional efforts to combat human trafficking through our development program. For instance, the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking program works with ASEAN Member States to build capacity to provide just punishment of traffickers and protect victims’ human rights. The TRIANGLE in ASEAN program promotes safe and fair migration by strengthening national and regional labour migration governance frameworks within ASEAN. Australia also delivers targeted peer‑to‑peer assistance to partner countries under the *Indo-Pacific Justice and Security Program*.

Australia agrees that trafficking in women and girls is a phenomenon rooted in gender-based discrimination and inequality, and is a form of gender-based violence. We recognise that conflict and post-conflict settings, and humanitarian crises, increase the risk of trafficking of women and girls. We also agree that women are not exclusively victims and survivors, and that they play an important role in protection, relief and recovery, in line with the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

We ask the Special Rapporteur to share best practice examples of policy and legislative measures that have integrated a gender and survivor perspective to ensure prevention and protection efforts are gender-responsive and based on survivors’ needs.

**338 Words**