**Human Rights Council – 45th session**

**Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences**

**15 September 2020**

**Australian Statement**

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for his presentation.

Addressing the drivers of slavery in the response and recovery from COVID-19 requires political will, comprehensive national approaches and international cooperation. Strengthening global and regional instruments and institutions complements our domestic efforts. Through our *Partnerships for Recovery,* Australia is committed to ensuring recovery efforts are focused on delivering positive outcomes.

We have intensified our efforts to combat slavery in Australia and in global supply chains, including by releasing practical guidance for businesses impacted by COVID‑19 about how to protect vulnerable workers in their operations and supply chains.

The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Human Trafficking and Related Transnational Crime, co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia, is bringing together its 49 member governments and organisations to address challenges arising from the pandemic in our region.

Australia is developing an updated five-year National Action Plan and International Strategy to combat human trafficking and modern slavery.

Australia is concerned that the pandemic has increased the vulnerability of all people - women and girls in particular - to slavery. We ask the Special Rapporteur how states, business and civil society can work together to address these vulnerabilities.

**190 Words**