**Human Rights Council – 45th session

Explanation of Vote**

 **Resolution on Eliminating inequality within and among States for the realization of all Human Rights**

**Australia Statement**

**6 October 2020**

Australia cannot support the draft resolution L.37. We thank the penholder for its engagement on this text, but we regret that our high-priority concerns – and those of many other states – were not accommodated in the final draft.

Australia shares the penholder’s deep concern that extreme poverty persists around the world, and we recognise that extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights. Reducing poverty is a particular focus of Australia’s development assistance program. In the HRC, we co-sponsor the regular resolution on this issue, and we support the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.

Given the established resolution on extreme poverty and human rights, we do not see what L.37 contributes to the HRC’s consideration of this important issue.

We have serious concerns with several elements of this text. Among the most serious of these is the focus on inequality ‘among’ states, which we do not see as pertinent to the question of the enjoyment of human rights.

We also have strong concerns with the resolution’s implication that the alleviation of poverty is a precondition for the promotion and protection of human rights, and we remind all members that all States agreed, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, that a lack of development may not be invoked to justify the abridgement of internationally recognised human rights.

Similarly we are concerned with elements of the text that mis-state the relationship between the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights, and the suggestion – inconsistent with international law – that ‘extreme poverty, deep inequality and exclusion’ constitute a violation of human rights as such.

While Australia supports genuine efforts to address poverty, and extreme poverty, we are concerned that the draft resolution L.37 does not contribute positively to this objective. Instead, it undermines the international human rights system which seeks to promote and protect the human rights of all individuals, including the poorest and most vulnerable.

***325 words.***