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UNGA Third Committee Item 72: Promotion and protection of human rights: ID with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women

Intervention of 4 October 2019

Thank you Chair and Madame Simonovic,

Australia welcomes the Special Rapporteur's report on a human rights-based approach to mistreatment and violence against women and support's the report's conclusions and recommendations.

Across the spectrum of their lives, women and girls are perhaps at their most vulnerable during childbirth.

You describe this as a taboo issue, so it is terrific we can have an exchange today with so many requests for the floor from member states across the globe.

Complications arising from pregnancy and childbirth are the leading causes of death for women and particularly for girls around the world.

Australia supports the report's finding that violence, abuse, and a lack of respect for women and girls and their human rights, have the potential to deeply compromise physical and mental health and wellbeing, and contribute to mortality and morbidity.

Australia concurs with the Special Rapporteur's conclusion that women's rights include:

- the right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health, free from mistreatment and violence

- including the right to dignified, humane and respectful reproductive health services and obstetric care
- and including the right to autonomy, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent and choice, which a number of delegations have picked up well in their statements today.

A lot of excellent questions have been asked already. Given the time, I will piggy back on those and look forward to your responses.

Thank you.