**Office for Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

**Half day general discussion on trafficking in women and girls in the context of**

**global migration**

**22 February 2019**

**Three minute Oral Intervention**

Australia welcomes the Committee’s efforts to develop a general recommendation in this vital area of women’s human rights. The Committee’s guidance through its general recommendations is a valuable source of direction.

Trafficking in women and girls is a phenomenon rooted in gender-based discrimination and inequality, and constitutes gender-based violence against women. Conflict, humanitarian crises and disasters constitute increased risk for trafficking, where women and girls experience unique consequences.

The Australian Government is committed to preventing and addressing human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, domestically, regionally, and internationally. Australia has had a comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy to combat these crimes since 2004, and has ratified relevant international treaties.

Australia maintained its Tier 1 ranking in the 2018 United States Trafficking in Persons Report for the 15th consecutive year.

Partnering with business is needed to disrupt human exploitation in supply chains. Australia’s Modern Slavery Act 2018 seeks to do this, while the Bali Process Government and Business Forum, co‑chaired by Australia and Indonesia, is leading regional efforts.

International cooperation is vital and must be integrated. Australia chairs the Alliance 8.7 partnership, and co-convenes the Financial Sector Commission, which complement the Call to Action to end forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking.

 Victims and survivors must be assisted to re-gain their place in the community, including access to legal and migration services, case management support, financial assistance, secure accommodation, medical treatment, counselling and social support.

Australia re-affirms our commitment to advance the interests, and defend the rights of women and girls, in Australia and around the world.

**254 words**