

Australia's Pre-Recorded National Statement

delivered by HE Richard Sadleir, Australian Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Vienna

30th Session of the CCPCJ, 17-21 May 2021

Chair

Australia congratulates our hosts and all delegations for their continuing commitment to this important forum in the face of ongoing challenges caused by COVID-19.

Transnational, serious, and organised crime is an enduring threat to our global and regional security, stability and economic development.

COVID has highlighted the agility of criminal enterprises, and brought new challenges to the fore, including greater vulnerabilities of our citizens due to increased online activity, and new distribution methods for illicit goods, given disruption to traditional supply chains.

We too must adapt and evolve—we must cooperate and consistently step-up our efforts if we are to thwart those who threaten our prosperity and undermine the rule of law.

Chair

Australia has a *National Strategy to Fight Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime*. It serves as a powerful framework for government agencies, the private sector and the broader community to work together in tackling this insidious threat.

We have pivoted our development program to address the serious impacts of COVID in our region, centering our efforts on health security, stability, economic recovery, and protecting the most vulnerable. Increased poverty and inequality provide fertile ground for the establishment of criminal and terrorist networks. To this end, we are investing in partner country efforts to tackle corruption and strengthen the rule of law and access to justice.

Rapid growth in information and communications technologies has helped facilitate the production of, and access to, child abuse material. It has added a constantly evolving cyber dimension to this most heinous of crimes. Combating child sexual exploitation and abuse online remains one of Australia's top priorities.

So too does countering human trafficking and modern slavery, as it does for this Commission.

Chair

Australia's Foreign Minister Marise Payne, with her Spanish counterpart Minister Gonzalez Laya, convened a meeting of women foreign ministers on 28 April to discuss the gender implications of the COVID pandemic, with a focus on human trafficking. Women and girls are increasingly at risk. Technology acts as an enabler for perpetrators seeking to exploit those in vulnerable situations. Now, more than ever, international collaboration is vital.

This Commission is an invaluable forum for the sharing of ideas and expertise relating to criminal justice and crime prevention and to assist the international community to implement the well-established legal frameworks on these issues. We look forward to the discussions and negotiations that lie ahead of us this week.

Thank you, Chair.