

## **Australia Statement**

### **UN Meeting on 'Combating antisemitism and other forms of racism and hate – the challenges of teaching tolerance and respect in the digital age'**

Australia welcomes this meeting to discuss the challenges we all face in teaching tolerance and respect – and combating antisemitism and other forms of racism and hate – in the digital age.

It's an unfortunate reality that the many benefits and opportunities of the internet come at the cost of its many dark corners where racism and hate flourish.

And increasingly, those corners are growing and spreading. In too many cases, hate is becoming mainstream.

Improved understanding and commemoration of the Holocaust is one way of addressing antisemitism – and distortion or denial of the Holocaust is a particularly pernicious example of antisemitism that is all too common online.

We are pleased to have joined earlier this month as the 33<sup>rd</sup> member state of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance – and its first from the Indo-Pacific region.

Membership of this Alliance is one measure of our commitment to strengthen and advance Holocaust education, research and remembrance.

Of course, antisemitism is only one of many forms of hate speech thriving online. One does not have to look far to find examples of hate speech directed at Muslims, particular races or other groups, including LGBTI persons.

This is a serious problem with real-world effects.

While blocking or removing content from social media platforms is part of the response, a real solution will necessarily be longer-term.

It will require states to respect freedom of religion or belief – a particular priority for Australia in its current term on the Human Rights Council.

We know respect for freedom of religion or belief, and a commitment to multiculturalism, contributes to cohesive and resilient societies – both online and off.

It will unquestionably require a renewed commitment of states to promote and protect the fundamental human rights of all their citizens, regardless of their religious belief, sexual orientation, race or any other factor.

Thank you,