**Intersessional Panel Discussion on the Right to Social Security**

**Statement by Australia**

**Monday 1 November 2021**

Thankyou Madame President,

Australia welcomes today’s discussion on the right to social security.

We consider it especially important that this discussion highlights and includes the unique social security needs of persons with disabilities.

Globally, too many persons with disabilities do not receive the personal, social, economic or therapeutic supports required to maximise their potential and to participate as equal members of society.

Without adequate supports, persons with disabilities are at significantly increased risk of poverty, isolation, violence and abuse, and institutionalisation.

Life-long, comprehensive social security coverage is essential to provide persons with disabilities with choice and control over their lives, economic security to plan for the future, and to enable them to contribute fully to social and economic life.

Australia is committed to upholding a human-rights based approach to disability services, in full compliance with the CRPD.

Australia’s world-leading National Disability Insurance Scheme, for example, provides Australians with disabilities the services and supports needed to participate fully in their communities, to determine their own best interests and to engage as equal partners in decision‑making.

Madame President,

Australia’s social support system adapted well during the COVID-19 pandemic, including by providing additional financial supports.

Internationally, however, COVID‑19 has highlighted gaps in some social security coverage, including a lack of community-based services for persons with disabilities. States now have an opportunity to develop better, more inclusive systems for the future.

We call on all States to include persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the design, development and implementation of both mainstream and disability-specific social security systems.

Policies should be guided by the general principle that persons with disabilities know best how their needs can be met.

I thank you.