Country: Australia
Committee: Historic Security Council (1973)

Australia is proud of this opportunity to once again be part of the Security Council. This year proves to be an important juncture in the history of the world, as this short decade has demonstrated the importance of this body as highlighted by the numerous threats to international peace and stability currently confronting this evolving world. Political and military developments of the past year have demonstrated the important role that the Security Council plays within the international community as it addresses threats to global peace and stability and by dictating a continued and maintained effort to prevent future hostilities, and Australia embraces this body’s primary responsibility to ensure international peace and security.

Topic A: The Situation in the Middle East

The situation in the Middle East continues to hamper efforts to promote international peace and security. Australia is aware of and concerned with the effects that continued conflict within the region will have, as it represents not just a regional destabilizing threat, but also poses a threat towards great-power détente. In addition, the current conditions in the region present a number of issues which Australia has worked to advance: the right of self determination, humanitarianism, the right of states to exist free of intimidation, and the peaceful rather than forceful settlement of disputes.

The extant political conflicts in the Middle East present a substantial threat to international peace. There can be no peace until the Arab States respect and recognize Israel’s right to exist. Equally, there can be no peace until Israeli forces have withdrawn from occupied territories to secure and recognized boundaries and just settlements for addressing refugees have been achieved.

Australia continues to take issue with Israel occupying the territories which it acquired in 1967. Furthermore, Australia urges Israel to take no actions to hamper a peaceful and final agreement concerning the occupied areas, as this would represent a violation of the principles dictated in the United Nations Charter. Australia strongly urges Israel and other relevant states to cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary General in order to establish a just and equitable solution to the conflicts at hand. Australia highly recommends that Israel fully respect the principles dictated in General Assembly Resolution 2799, particularly those pertaining to the occupied territories in the region. Additionally, Australia stresses that Israel recognize the 1949 General Armistice Agreement, which would allow the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine to continue to operate, as it has the potential to become an effective tool in preventing hostilities in the region. Questions pertaining to refugees can only be addressed once Israeli withdraws from currently occupied territories.

Australia understands Israel’s reluctance to return occupied territories as a result of feeling threatened by external, regional alliances. However, Israel must acknowledge that occupation has a similar effect on Arab States. Arab unification for defense threatens Israel, and Australia views a separate Palestinian state, however, as the best way to achieve a cessation of hostilities.
**Topic B: The Situation in Africa**

Australia realizes the turbulent situation facing African countries resulting from their emergence from colonial dominance and how this political shift threatens international peace and security. Australia affirms the importance of self-determination, found in the United Nations Charter. However, Australia understands the fact that such processes are often case-sensitive. Considerations dealing with future, potential disruptions to peace within the region must be considered when discussing any possible actions in Africa. While supporting the right of self determination, Australia does not advocate the overthrow of established governments, however unjust, and is widely concerned with the erection of authoritarian, one-party-civilian or military regimes in their stead.

In the immediate past, Australia agreed that political change in Rhodesia was the responsibility of the British Government. However, the position of Australia has changed substantially as a result of Australia’s newly-elected, domestic administration. Australia urges the international community to refer to Rhodesia henceforth by the named used by a majority of the people in that territory: Zimbabwe. Australia strives to prevent the racist actions of oppressive governments and urges the Security Council to take effective action in order to bring peaceful resolution to the situation in Zimbabwe.

Australia firmly stands behind Security Council Resolutions 232 and 253. Australia condemns the specific actions of Portugal and South Africa violating many of the principles of the aforementioned resolutions, as they greatly hamper international efforts to resolve the current situation in Africa. However, Australia discourages economic actions directed toward peace building in Zimbabwe as we are concerned with the effectiveness of such measures, as these may have detrimental effects on the population and burgeoning economy. Furthermore, Australia will continue to condemn the presence of South African forces in Zimbabwe.

While the possibility of armed intervention, however repugnant, exists as a ameliorative possibility, Australia would participate in limited operations designed to ensure a peaceful transition to a truly representative government. Great Britain and other commonwealth countries, including Australia, possess a unique position to act as peace guarantors. Australia stresses the importance of the international community and its obligation to mediate such a transition. Australia is expressly concerned with the erection of authoritarian, one-party-civilian or military governments in newly independent countries.

Australia fully supports severing economic, military, and defense ties with the Apartheid regime of South Africa. Australia, while not favoring the removal diplomatic credentials from South African delegates as long as they are recognized by the United Nations, does favor expulsion of the South Africa from the United Nations as a whole. Australia does not share the opinion held by many member states that South Africa can be made more responsive if it continues to be included within the United Nations. Continued South African membership must be weighed against the effects of the standing members. As a nation which has clearly violated the Charter, ignored the Principles of the United Nations and consistently showed no intentions of reversing its apartheid policies, South Africa’s continued membership must contribute to the efficacy of other member states.

Australia condemns the actions of Tanzania and other East African nations which practiced illegal intervention in Uganda’s domestic affairs. However, Australia applauds the two nations for creating and endorsing a formal agreement that ended hostilities between the two countries. Australia urges
this body to take all necessary actions, including the possible economic sanctions and the placement of military observers in the country to prevent further destabilizing in Uganda and the region.

**Topic C: The Situation in Asia: Vietnam**

South East Asia is an area of great geo-political importance to Australia. Australia has actively sought to bring about an effective end to its hostilities. At the beginning of last year, Australia effectively removed the last of its combatants in the area. By the end of January, Australia will give the Democratic Republic of Vietnam full diplomatic recognition.

Australia remains extremely displeased with the ineffectiveness of policies agreed upon during the peace talks in Paris last year. The Australian government and people were eager for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Furthermore, Australia is deeply concerned with the United States’ unfolding record of aggression, its support of an ineffective and unpopular government in the south of Vietnam, and what possibly constitutes deliberate efforts by the United States and South Vietnamese governments to subvert any possible future peace accords. Australia also condemns the continued bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the mining of Haipong harbor by the United States. However, Australia still calls upon the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to consider realistic criteria for national reconciliation. Australia would like other nations in the region, including Japan and Indonesia, to also condemn the acts of belligerent states in continuing hostilities.

Australia is deeply concerned with how continued regional conflicts will affect the geo-political security of the international community. Although the Australian government sees dramatic improvement in the region, this conflict has the possibility to both incite and renew great power conflicts. Finally, Australia demands that countries involved in the conflict respect the sovereignty of the bordering states in order to deter its spreading to neighboring countries.
Issues currently before the first committee are of great concern to many countries throughout the world including Australia. Australia has taken a prominent part in many UN activities including nonproliferation and disarmament negotiations. The proliferation of nuclear material in any region of the world represents a direct threat to every nation. Nuclear proliferation in the Middle East is of particular concern because the difficult security issues in the region will be made worse by countries within the region developing nuclear weapons and/or threatening the use of a first strike. Small arms and their illicit trafficking are also of great concern in Australia. Australians, fortunately, have been largely spared the devastating impact of illegal arms trafficking. However, that has not stopped the Australian government from remaining an active player in supporting measures to curb the illicit arms trade. The spread of small arms throughout countries and across borders helps to perpetuate violence among state and non-state actors. Australia believes that in order to solve these complex issues a concerted effort must be made both at the regional and global levels, if true measurable progress is to be made.

I. The Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
Since most threats to peace and security arise mainly among states located in the same region or sub-region, Australia sees cooperation – domestically, regionally and globally – as the key. The Australian government has taken an active role in supporting efforts to curb the illicit arms trade. Australia has some of the toughest small arms controls in the world, including controls on marking, record keeping, and imports and exports. State and Territory police maintain databases of all registered firearms. These registration systems are linked through the National Firearms and Registration Licensing system. Australia has focused efforts and resources at countries within the Asia-Pacific region. The foundation for weapons controls within the region is based on the NADI framework, including provisions governing standardized marking practices, enhanced record-keeping and strengthening border controls. Australia is concerned that over the last five years there has been a decline in the number of states reporting to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Australia supports increased transparency in countries reporting to the Register to build confidence. Further, at the international level, the 2001 Programme of Action is a good place to start for developing international standards on small arms. Enhancing the Programme of Action should begin with a legally binding instrument on tracing small arms and light weapons used in conflict situations and terrorist activities. Australia also recognizes the importance of regulating the activities of arms brokers. Fundamental to this is the principle that access to a firearm be based on “genuine need.” Concerned for the need to implement more effective stockpile management practices, Australia encourages states with the ability to contribute resources and aid in the building of new armories and the upgrading of old, deteriorating facilities. Building on the successes of its efforts at home and within the region, Australia remains committed to working with its international partners to address the challenges of small arms trafficking.
II. The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East

The framework for a response to the danger of nuclear proliferation exists in the form of the NPT – based nuclear non-proliferation regime. Since its inception in 1946, the Non Proliferation Treaty has proved to be an inadequate defense against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Review Conference of the NPT in May 2005 ended with no substantive agreement to address the growing challenges of non-proliferation. Australia would like to urge members to thoroughly look at and adopt some of the recommendations on how to strengthen the NPT from the El-Baradi report at the end of the conference. Among Australia’s top priority actions are the global application of the Additional Protocol, encouraging states to rapidly increase their efforts to ratify new rules of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the implementation of effective domestic controls over sensitive materials. Over the past 10 years the non-proliferation regime has faced serious challenges, particularly from the Middle East. Exposure of the A.Q. Kahn proliferation network showed proliferant states could readily acquire sensitive materials and technology and develop clandestine nuclear programs. Revelations of clandestine networks trafficking in nuclear materials and technology have exposed a major loophole in the non-proliferation regime. Strengthening the regime will seriously limit the ability of both state and non-state actors to misuse sensitive materials and technology. Australia has joined many others in the General Assembly year after year in the support of a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. Australia has consistently called upon UN member states within the Middle East yet to sign and ratify the NPT and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so immediately. The challenges faced by the first committee are to put in place stronger measures that help to curb nuclear proliferation not just in the Middle East but across the international community.
**Country:** Australia  
**Committee:** Second Committee of General Assembly, Economic and Financial

Australia believes the work of the second committee is crucial towards the progress of sustainable development around the world.

I. Biological Diversity

The world’s population and economy are rapidly growing and placing increasing demands on natural resources. While the use of natural resources have improved our living conditions they have made a negative impact on the environment. Environmental degradation has the potential to threaten economic growth because the loss of biodiversity threatens food supplies, opportunities for recreation and tourism, sources of wood, medicine and energy. Biological diversity is “the web of life” on which we depend. The weakening of the productivity of an ecosystem leads to more natural disasters and human-caused stresses such as pollution and climate change.

The 1992 Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro brought universal acknowledgement of the importance protecting biological diversity. The Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted and entered into force on December 29, 1993. As of July 2005 there are 188 countries committed to biodiversity conservation while pursuing economic development. Australia ratified the Convention on June 18, 1993 and holds a good record on cooperation in environmental management and protection of biodiversity. Australia is actively seeking to encourage trade liberalization while accommodating biodiversity by pursuing international agreements that hold firms responsible for environmental costs associated with production and usage of natural resources. Australia promotes training for all trade and aid administrators to ensure clear understanding of need for conservation and ecologically sustainable use of biodiversity. Internationally, Australia’s aid program continues to promote conservation of biodiversity by funding projects through the Environment Assistance Program and other aid programs that assist developing countries in strengthening environmental expertise, legislation and institutions relating to conservation, increasing the level of technology transfer associated with biological diversity conservation, and continuing to evaluate ecological impacts and improving remedial action. Finally, Australia is engaged in multilateral efforts concerned with conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity through international organizations and programs such as United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the South Pacific Regional Environment Program and UNESCO.

In compliance with the Convention on Biological Diversity Australia agrees to the three goals set forth by the Convention; conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and fair sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources. Meeting the challenges of achieving these goals requires better understanding of the importance of biodiversity among the world’s population. The second committee should strive to enhance policy coherence on land use, food, water, energy, employment, development, conservation, economics, and trade by improving implementation of the Convention, ensuring that biodiversity concerns are integrated into programs and policies at the regional and global levels.
II. Microfinance

Over 1 billion people in the world today live under unacceptable conditions of poverty. Poverty suffocates the economy and threatens the stability of nations. Many other international concerns, such as education, disease, and equality all begin with the eradication of poverty. One of the most successful methods for doing this is through microfinance/microcredit. Through loans, savings, insurance, transfer services and other financial products, low-income clients not only receive the money they need, but also the support network that will assist them in developing the skills to maintain their independence.

The 1997 Microcredit Summit launched a nine-year campaign to reach 100 million of the world’s poorest families, especially the women of those families, with credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by this year, 2005. Therefore, the United Nations declared 2005 the Year of Microcredit aimed at eliminating poverty through building inclusive financial sectors to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. As Kofi Annan has said, “the International Year of Microcredit offers a pivotal opportunity for the international community to engage in a shared commitment to meet this challenge together.” The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is leading a process to identify key constraints and opportunities for the promotion of inclusive financial sectors, guided by a multilateral steering committee comprising the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labor Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development. The results of extensive international dialogue will lead to the preparation and dissemination of a "Blue Book on Building Inclusive Financial Sectors" in mid-2005, outlining the obstacles that countries face so that concrete actions may be taken to position microfinance as an integral part of a country's financial system. Follow-up summits have since occurred in 2004 at the Middle East/Africa Region Microcredit Summit, in 2005 at the Latin America/Caribbean Region Microcredit Summit, and at the 2005 Microcredit Summit. Australia attended each of these summits. In addition, a National Committee has been established through the UN Office and includes many NGOs active in the area of microcredit and microenterprise development. Australia plans to hold a meeting with the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade at the Parliament House. The National Committee is also launching community based education activities. A program of events is being held during the Year of Microcredit to promote its role in the alleviation of poverty.

Australia will continue to be a part of the discussion on microfinance and believes that the information provided by the UNDCF Blue Book will be critical to understanding the full spectrum of microfinance and its capacity to eradicate poverty. Australia recommends that the Second Committee adhere to the microfinance objectives outlined by the United Nations Capital Development Fund. These objectives of Ownership, Capacity Development, Participation, Innovation, Policy Impact, Replication, Subsidiary, Sustainability and Partnership ensure that microfinance is effectively implemented within all nations. Australia also recommends that these objectives be accompanied by a strong educational program that makes prospects aware of available microfinance opportunities and educates private institutions of the benefits of investing in microloans. Through microfinance, the international community can strengthen the powerful, but often untapped, entrepreneurial spirit existing in communities around the world.
The issues addressed by the Third Committee of the General Assembly are important to Australia. Australia’s active involvement in the work of the UN has been reflected through its widely acknowledged contributions across the spectrum of the UN activities—particularly in the areas of Social, Humanitarian and Cultural affairs; therefore, it is in our best interest to contribute to and support the work of the Third Committee as it addresses the protection of Migrants and the right to food.

I. Protection of Migrants

Over the last 25 years, the global migrant worker population has more than doubled to include 175 million people; much of this growth has occurred in developing areas. The primary issue of concern has been the increase in human trafficking of migrant workers and their family members, mainly women and children. An estimated 750,000 people become victims of trafficking every year, most of which are forced to work in fields, sweatshops, and are victims of sexual exploitation. Trafficking is degrading for the victim, the victim’s family, and is harmful to the harboring state.

Australia is a regional leader in the fight against trafficking in persons, and is committed to preventing the problem, prosecuting perpetrators, and protecting victims of trafficking. The Australian government strongly condemns the repugnant trade in human beings, and has taken a number of steps to combat the crime. Our government has demonstrated its commitment by participating in negotiations for the U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. In 2003, the Australian Government announced a $20 million whole-of-government package of measures to combat trafficking in persons, incorporated in an Action Plan to Eradicate Trafficking in Persons, released in June 2004. This package complements pre-existing efforts, including AusAid activities in the region worth $14 million and Commonwealth offenses of deceptive recruiting, slavery and sexual servitude, all of which have stiff penalties.

The Australian Government has also been using the networks developed through the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime to pursue a greater regional cooperation. As an example, Australia and Indonesia have co-chaired two regional ministerial conferences on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. In addition, Australia has worked with China to produce model legislation designed to help countries draft domestic laws criminalizing trafficking in persons.

Australia’s contribution has focused on capacity building, legislative reform, border management, public awareness and information sharing. In addition to Australia’s overseas aid program, the Australian Government provides ongoing financial support to the IOM, and international organizations committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. We remain committed to ambitious yet achievable outcomes and will continue to honor our obligations by monitoring the extent of trafficking of people into Australia, by responding to emerging domestic and international trends in people trafficking, by providing development aid aimed at alleviating the conditions that foster people trafficking and related transnational crime, and by acting with due consideration for the interests of victims of trafficking.
II. The Right to Food

According to FAO, nearly 852 million people suffered from hunger in 2004. The World Food Programme estimates that nearly 33% of children under the age of 5 suffer from chronic malnutrition. Hunger and malnutrition thus affect more people than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. Access to food has historically been considered a basic human right, which is spelled out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Hunger is not caused by a lack of food on a global level, but by the inability of certain people to gain access to food that does exist.

As part of the 1996 World Food summit, Australia pledged to halve the number of persons in the world who suffer from hunger by 2015 under the Rome Declaration, and has acknowledge the importance of the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and its relevance to many indigenous peoples and small farms families. Through several international programs and policy interventions from the government, Australia has provided generous humanitarian assistance to nationals and across the globe.

In May 2003, the Australian Government announced a $1 billion contribution for programs and initiatives that would enhance the food security of people in the developing world. Australia’s food security strategy includes the promotion of rural development, alleviating poverty, enhancing women’s access to resources, preparation for disasters and emergencies, research for agricultural development, and open trade. Furthermore, Australia places a high emphasis on self-sustainability. Recognizing that a threat to food security is the rapid decline in agricultural biodiversity, the Australian Government made a commitment of $16.5 million to the Global Crop Diversity Trust. This initiative will provide secure funding for gene banks to conserve plant genetic resources for food and agriculture around the world.

The approach taken to alleviating extreme poverty and hunger will vary according to the particular situation in each country. However in our view there are three strategies that are generally appropriate and applicable. First, governments must adopt broad policies that facilitate and promote the overall economic growth of the nation. Second, within that framework they must ensure that farmers and indigenous people have the chance to acquire the necessary skills to take advantage of the opportunities presented by a growing economy; and finally, farmers and indigenous communities themselves need to find innovative ways of reconciling individual economic aspirations with a collective tradition of land ownership.

Australia supports the work of the Third Committee in working to facilitate an international exchange of ideas and strategies to encourage the progress towards the goal of the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.
Country: The Commonwealth of Australia
Committee: GA Sixth Committee

I. Measures To Eliminate International Terrorism

Australia joins with other nations in condemning all acts of terrorism. Like many states, Australia has been deeply affected by terrorism. Australia’s experience with modern terrorism dates as far back as the Sydney Hilton Hotel bombing in 1978. More recently there have been incidents of Australian nationals targeted on foreign soil, scores of Australians who lost their lives in the 2002 nightclub bombing on the Indonesian isle of Bali, and then there was the 2004 bombing outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. Australia remains to this day a target of terrorist actors, in part because of important contributions to the war on terrorism. According to a recent UN report, al-Qaeda continues to evolve and gain followers. Evidence of the continued al-Qaeda efforts against Australia can be seen in the recent arrest of a cell of terrorist suspects operating in Sydney. Australia has a vested interest in working with the international community to combat international terrorism.

Australia supports the United Nations efforts to put a stop to terrorism including resolutions [1267, 1525, 1535, 1540 and 1566] and passed by the United Nations Security Council such as the twelve conventions passed by the United Nations General Assembly since 1963. These conventions focus on such issues as airplane and ship safety, the illegal use of nuclear materials, terrorist bombings and the financing of terrorism. The General Assembly and its Sixth Committee have an important role to play in the prevention of terrorism, particularly when it comes to setting international standards to combat this daunting threat. It must not be forgotten that it is the United Nations’ responsibility to insure international security. However, as has been noted by the Security Council, much of the effort to fight terrorism must take place at the regional level. Pursuant to this Australia has made a number of efforts with regional partners in forums such as APEC, ASEAN, The Pacific Islands Forum and the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering. Australia has also made a number of bilateral efforts. An example of this is the Australia-Indonesia cooperation in forming the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation, which is an important resource to fight terrorism. It is also important for countries to make agreements with other nations beyond the regional level to promote international security. For example, Australia takes very seriously its commitment to the United States of America through the ANZUS treaty. Pursuant to the faithful execution of this treaty Australia considers any terrorist attack on the United States, for example the tragic terrorist attack on September 11th, to represent a mutual threat to Australia and thus contributed elite troops to the military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Regional capacity building is critical and should be committed to by all member nations. Australia encourages all member nations that have not done so to report on their counter-terrorism cooperation and regional efforts to the 1267 Committee. As stated before, it is important for the General Assembly to provide international standards. A comprehensive convention against terrorism and a complete international definition of terrorism would help towards these ends. In seeking guidance in finding an appropriate definition Australia turns to Security Council Resolution 1566, operative clause 3 for guidance. Australia also recommends that member states develop and enforce their domestic laws to help prevent and punish terrorism.

Australia recognizes that the power of the United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapters VI and VII, to impose sanctions is a critically important tool. This is particularly true when handling human rights violators and dictatorships. After all, the other significant tool the Security Council has is military invasion, which is a far greater step to take than economic sanctions in most cases. However, as a major proponent of free trade, Australia believes that this power should be used with restraint. It is especially unfortunate when sanctions justly placed on one country by the United Nations impacts that country’s neighbors and trade partners unjustly and negatively.

Fortunately the United Nations Charter provides a remedy in Chapter VII, Article 50, which allows any state, regardless of UN membership, to appeal to the security council for solutions or compensation from losses when sanctions taken against another state cause economic problems for them. This is a needed process, and the United Nations should follow the methodology to determine the impacts on third party states as put forth by the ad-hoc expert group formed by resolution 53/107. Australia finds the execution mechanism of Article 50 to be effective, and would like to see it maintained in its current form. Australia believes, however, that it is possible to work to avoid these spill over effects as well as to alleviate the problems that sanctions can cause to the citizen populations of targeted states. This would be through the applications of targeted sanctions, also known as “Smart Sanctions.” These sanctions target directly individuals, companies, and organizations, and sometimes specific commodities, and are designed to be an appropriate punishment to certain parties, while allowing trade in needed goods for citizens. Examples of these targeted sanctions include an arms embargo, a freezing of the accounts of specific individuals or government entities, or a limitation on air travel. Tragically Australia was forced to impose bilateral sanctions Zimbabwe in 2002 and Fiji in 2004 because of actions in those states against their own citizens. Australia went the route of “Smart Sanctions” and was able to restrict the trade activity of certain ministers and guilty parties while sparing the citizens many of the repercussions of broader sanctions. Australia also supported use of these types of targeted sanctions in 1992 on Iraq, in order to try and lessen general impact of those sanctions.

These types of limited sanctions are particularly effective when there is a targeted small group or individual in a county that is showing contempt for international law and behaving in such a way as to warrant sanctions. Australia recommends that the possible effects on third party states be considered in the design phase of sanctions, by focusing on limited these effects. Australia further recommends that, in the future, the UN consider Smart Sanctions for any resolution calling for sanctions that they may be feasible for, not only to protect innocent parties in the sanctioned country to reduce the number of third parties affected by sanctions.
The issues addressed by the Economic and Social Council have always been of great interest to Australia. Australia has been a member of the economic and social council in 1986-89 and has assisted the UN Human rights commission. The Millennium Development goals and Human settlements issues have become major concerns for Australia. Australia has and always will continue to ensure adequate shelter for all and making Human settlements and communities more productive, healthy, safe, non-discriminatory, equitable and sustainable to contribute to achieving world peace and Human solidarity. This is of great importance to Australia and the International community because Human settlements are vital in fighting poverty and eradicating extreme hunger outlined in the Millennium Development goals. Therefore, it is of great interest for Australia and the international community to ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

I. Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
Australia has taken great steps in ensuring various development programs are introduced in developing nations and reporting any Human Rights abuses. Australia has been involved with the UN Human rights commission from 1994-96 and 2003-2005. With the International Community Australia is urging for additional development assistance is needed in order to make significant progress on the international development agenda such as: combating HIV/AIDS, Human rights abuses, promoting gender equality, empowerment of women and eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. This is important to Australia and the International community because of the Millennium development goals.

II. Human Settlements
Australia continues to be a leader in ensuring adequate shelter for all. Australia has taken great steps in ensuring that its own citizens have adequate shelter. There have been a lot of goals of ensuring adequate shelter for all and making human settlements more productive, healthy, safe and non-discriminatory. In order to achieve sustainable development there has to be a strong sense of human solidarity, and stability within the human settlements and communities. The implementation of these strategies and goals for human settlements whilst still assuring adequate shelter for all are the primary responsibility of Australia and overall each country at the national and local levels, within the legal frame work of each country and should take in account the economic, social and environmental diversity of conditions in each country. Five decades ago, two thirds of the world population lived in rural areas. Today more than half live in cities. With this massive wave of urbanization has come many problems including an increase in poverty levels. The Habitat Agenda created in 1997 to address the problems of Human settlements in urbanizing and globalizing world. Its main focuses is to ensure adequate housing for all and developing sustainable human settlements.

III. Bioethics
The 7th World Congress of Bioethics—held in Sydney at the University of New South Wales—was a great success. The Congress was planned to take a broad approach to bioethics. The sub-themes covered public health ethics, ethics of Indigenous health, and refiguring the body, as well as a general theme that allowing for a range of bioethics topics including ethical issues in biotechnology and clinical ethics. The Congress included internationally and nationally renowned keynote and
plenary speakers, events for the public (an Open Forum on biotechnology, stem cells and cloning and a Public Lecture on human rights and bioethics).
Country: Australia  
Committee: UNHCR  
Topic 1  

**Implementing the Goals and Objectives of Convention Plus**

Australia’s historical support for human rights reveals that Australia is solidly committed to making the fundamental principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a reality for all.

The Government views human rights as an inseparable part of Australia’s overall foreign policy approach, both because of the treatment of individuals is of itself a matter of concern to Australians and because promoting and protecting human rights underpins Australia’s broader security and economic interests. The protection of human rights is a crucial aspect of good governance—a basic condition for stability and prosperity in all countries.

The core principle of the Refugees Convention is non-refoulement; refugees should not be expelled or returned to the country of persecution where their life or freedom would be threatened on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Non-refoulement is also a core principle in other human rights instruments such as the Convention against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; The Convention was developed at a time when the global community was determined to find a way of cooperating to meet the protection needs of victims of oppression. The instrument recognised that refugees are forced to flee when the protection of their own country is no longer available. At the same time, there are provisions in the Convention that were specifically intended to preserve the sovereign right of states to determine who may enter and remain within their territory, and to ensure that, as far as possible, it could not be abused by those with no right or need of protection. Convention Plus is an international effort initiated and coordinated by the Office of the UNHCR. Its aim is to improve refugee protection worldwide and to facilitate the resolution of refugee problems through multilateral special agreements. This will be achieved through a process of discussion and negotiation with States and other partners of UNHCR to mobilize support and bring about firmer commitments.

Australia expresses its commitment to refugees and the system of international protection through dedicated funding of our overseas development cooperation program and by supporting UNHCR and its programs as a significant donor and a leading member of its policy advisory committee. The Australian Government along with its sixty-six nations endorsed the Agenda for Protection which contains six goals for the improvement of the international system of protection of asylum seekers and refugees: strengthening implementation of the 1951 Refugees Convention and its 1967 Protocol; protecting refugees within broader migration movements; sharing of burdens and responsibilities more equitably and building of capacities to receive and protect refugees; addressing security-related concerns more effectively; redoubling the search for durable solutions meeting the protection needs of refugee women and refugee children. Australia’s annual Humanitarian Program complements this support by offering resettlement opportunities for people in humanitarian need for whom resettlement in Australia is the most appropriate available option. Furthermore, the Australian government urges all nations with the same interest to be involved in the Convention Plus process.

**Topic 2**

**Strengthening UNHCR Repatriation Operations**

Australia supports the United Nations’ efforts to promote and protect human rights. However, we also recognise that states parties and the committees themselves both encounter difficulties in pursuing their objectives—not least because of the massive volume of information required to be collected, submitted, translated and considered. This situation must be improved if the system is to continue to contribute effectively to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Repatriation Operations are designed not only to help returning refugees, but also members of local communities which, in developing countries, are often as poor and deprived as the refugees themselves. Australia has therefore sought improvements in the UN human rights machinery by reforming the practices of the human rights treaty bodies that are aimed at strengthening the UN’s ability to contribute of improving human rights standards— an initiative that complements the practical approach we bring to our bilateral human rights diplomacy. Australia has taken several practical initiatives to further treaty body reform, and has continued to pursue this goal during our membership of the Commission on Human Rights from 2003 to 2005.

The Australian Government supports a wide range of domestic and international efforts to eliminate discrimination and violence against women and girls in Australia and globally. Domestic legislation and institutional mechanisms have been introduced to advance the status of women and eliminate discrimination these include: the Sex Discrimination Act, the Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Act, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Agency and the Office of the Status of Women.

Under the Australian government’s offshore resettlement program, refugees and persons in need of humanitarian assistance can be resettled in Australia; permanent or temporary visas. The majority of refugees are
subject to persecution in their home country and who are in need of resettlement are identified and referred to Australia by UNHCR. The Refugee category includes Refugee, In-country Special Humanitarian, Emergency Rescue and Woman at Risk sub-categories.

Australia's strong measures against human trafficking have freed up places for applicants under Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian program overseas and maintained the integrity of Australia's migration programs by reducing the 'pull' factors that encourage illegal people movement. Under the Migration Act 1958, any non-citizen who arrives unlawfully in mainland Australia is to be detained until granted a visa or removed from Australia. The law applies equally to adults and children.