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UNITED NATIONS

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Launch Event: Assessment Report of the High-Level Review of United Nations Sanctions

**Statement by Mr Michael Bliss
Assistant Secretary, International Legal Branch, Australian
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

I would like to thank you all for attending this launch event for the Assessment of the High Level Review of UN Sanctions Report.

I would particularly like to thank our panel speakers for coming today H.E. Ms. Elinor Hammarskjöld, Director General of Legal Affairs of the Swedish Foreign Ministry as well as Loraine Rickard-Martin and Rico Carisch, our wonderful partners for this report from Compliance and Capacity Skills International (CCSI) .

Our agenda today will be quite simple. I would like to provide a little background to the assessment report before handing over to Sweden to make some remarks drawing on their current experiences on the Security Council. Our partners from Compliance and Capacity Skills International will then take you through the key elements of the assessment report. We will then conclude with a Q&A Session.

Let me start then with some background to the High Level Review Assessment project. Australia with our tireless partners from CCSI – Loraine and Rico – formally started the project back in August last year.

But its genesis goes back much earlier – to the release of the High Level Review Compendium in November 2015. The Compendium represented the first significant review of UN sanctions as a whole. We hope you have all had the time to read it cover to cover by now.

In the course of producing the HLR Compendium, we welcomed the opportunity to work with our fellow co-sponsors – Finland, Germany, Greece and Sweden. We have also appreciated their ongoing support with this Assessment project.

The 150 recommendations in the Compendium were envisaged as a starting point for initiatives and discussions to further enhance sanctions implementation.

From that starting point, this Assessment project has continued the discussion and digs deeper into the current priorities of Member States and other stakeholders on UN sanctions issues.

Given the nature of the Assessment project, we necessarily had a particular focus on outreach. And just let me touch on some of that outreach.

We conducted six roundtables or workshops. I won't go through the full list but these included roundtables with UN Security Council Members and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Group for example. I would like to thank the Missions of Sweden and Chile for hosting a number of these. Awareness raising events were also held during International Law Week and Geneva Peace Week last year.

We also conducted bilateral meetings with Member States as well as receiving written responses to surveys. Outreach to 350 enterprises and industry organisations also formed a substantial element of our efforts.

That outreach led to the production of the Assessment Report we have made available to you and which was circulated as a document of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

I won't go into the details of the Report as our partners from CCSI will do that a little later in our program.

I will just mention the three main chapters that the Assessment report covers based on specific areas raised in the course of our outreach which we understand are of particular interest to stakeholders. The first Chapter covers "More effective cooperation and transparency among all sanctions stakeholders" – which includes the development of specific tools to assist incoming chairs and experts from the E10. The second chapter is on "More accurate and collaborative sanctions implementation" – this includes due process procedures for example. The third main chapter is "Augmenting the sanctions implementation capacity of States that bear a disproportionate implementation burden" – this looks at the development of self-assessment tools and enhancing knowledge of technologies and services, and also captures new concerns and interests expressed by Member States. In doing so, it fulfils a core-purpose of the HLR – which is serving as an informal sensor of emerging requirements and solutions for enhanced sanctions implementation practices.

With that brief background and introduction to the Assessment report can I now invite remarks from H.E. Ms. Elinor Hammar skjöld, Director General of Legal Affairs of the Swedish Foreign Ministry. [660 wds/5-6 mins]

Closing Remarks

In closing, I would like to thank the panel and all of you for participating in this launch event today.

I think the Assessment Report demonstrates that there is a role that all Member States and stakeholders can play in enhancing UN sanctions measures and the way they are implemented.

We very much hope that the Report and the original High Level Review Compendium inspire you to consider the role you can play. Thank you.