Item 14: Health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

We commend the World Health Organization (WHO) for its work on supporting countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly through strengthened data collection systems. We commend the WHO’s work across agencies to improve SDG data and on broadening their reporting to include wider determinants of health.

Australia continues to put health efforts at the centre of our work in the Indo-Pacific, with Health Security being a key priority in our development Strategy, Partnerships for Recovery. This is driving strategic global and regional investments, including around $1.3 billion to support gender equality across our development program and supporting the SDGs.

Australia notes with concern the impact of the pandemic on universal health coverage, the tenet underpinning all health SDGs. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of building robust and resilient health systems that are prepared and can adapt to effectively respond in times of increased demand, while also maintaining core functions and service delivery.

Moving towards and sustaining universal health coverage is critically important to build resilient health systems and to promote more inclusive and fairer societies.

The 2030 Agenda is rooted in multi-sectoral and mutually reinforcing action. The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly highlighted the interdependence between people, prosperity and the planet. We have seen the close links between health and the environment, and the importance of investing in OneHealth. We have also seen the close relationship between health and the economy and the importance of sustainable health systems.

The SDGs provide us with the roadmap to recovery from the pandemic.