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## Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – 9<sup>th</sup> Session 11-15 July 2016

### Australia Statement on Item 4: Panel discussion on the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous persons with disabilities

The Australian Government is committed to creating a more inclusive Australian society, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have access to the same opportunities as other Australians.

We were pleased that our Ambassador was able to participate in the recent expert workshop on indigenous people with disabilities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a broad spectrum of disadvantage – reduced life expectancy and high levels of child mortality, poorer educational outcomes, and lower rates of employment.

Some 23.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have a disability.

The high prevalence of disability occurs in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for a range of reasons – from poor health care and nutrition to exposure to violence, psychological trauma and substance abuse.

Australia is committed to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is transforming Australia's system of support for people with disability through an insurance approach, rather than a welfare programme.

The insurance scheme ensures that eligible people with disability will be able to receive care and support over their lifetime, based on their needs, and that they will have choice and control over that support.

We are developing an engagement strategy to ensure culturally appropriate communication, engagement and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability accessing the scheme. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is one way of protecting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities.

In 2015, Australia released *Development for All 2015-2020*, our strategy for strengthening disability inclusive development in Australia's aid programme. *Development for All* emphasises the importance of the aid programme supporting the inclusion of people with disabilities in mainstream development efforts to ensure broader systems, policies and services include and benefit people with disabilities.

Through these major efforts, Australia is seeking to support the rights of indigenous people with disabilities both domestically and internationally.