

## UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES 2018

### STATEMENT

#### **Item 4 – Implementation of the six mandated areas Thursday, 19 April 2018 as delivered by Professor Ian Anderson**

Thank you Madam Chair

Australia continues to be committed to the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Today I would like to focus on Australia's approach to the mandated areas through our framework for Closing the Gap in Indigenous outcomes.

In 2008, Australian governments agreed to the Closing the Gap framework and targets. Four of the seven targets will expire in 2018 and Australian governments have agreed to work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, organisations and communities to refresh the Framework.

This partnership approach is integral. We recognize that Closing the Gap is not just about targets, but about how governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people work together to improve outcomes.

Central to our approach to the refresh is respecting culture, and building on the strengths and successes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The approach we are developing will set priorities, guide resource allocation, strengthen the use of data and evidence as well as to empower Indigenous peoples to make decisions about their future and to give more prominence to local decision making.

Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will occur through all stages of the refresh process. It has included, so far, a Special Gathering of approximately 70 Indigenous Australians from all states and territories. This Gathering enabled independent advice to be provided to the leaders of all Australian governments on future principles and priorities that need to be considered.

In alignment with this, we provide our strong support towards the importance of empowering Indigenous women and girls.

The Australian Government is exploring holistic and practical ways to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls through the national '*Wiyi U Thangani (Women's Voices): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future*' project, led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO.

An empowerment and strengths-based approach will complement the Government's work to reduce family and domestic violence, improve outcomes for Indigenous women and communities.

In closing, Australia supports the United Nation's proclamation of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Australia's support is another illustration of the Australian Government's commitment to revive, maintain, celebrate and promote Indigenous languages.

We acknowledge Mr Craig Ritchie, part of our delegation, who will serve on the UNESCO 2019 Steering Committee. Australia is broadly supportive of the Action Plan.

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