

Panel discussion on the causes and consequences of violence against indigenous women and girls, including those with disabilities

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Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission*

Thank you President,

This statement is made on behalf of the Australian Human Rights Commission, Australia's 'A-status' national human rights institution.

In Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 34 times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of violence. Our children are also overrepresented in violence statistics.

We know that gender inequality, racism and disability discrimination are drivers of violence against women and children in urban, rural and remote locations as well as across our society's institutions.

Adequate, and culturally sensitive support services to help with emotional and physical healing, as well as all the practical issues like housing and child care, are essential. These must be available to women and girls living in rural and remote areas where large distances and isolation makes access more difficult.

The Commission urges States to use the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* to develop strategies that combat violence within indigenous communities and across the broader community.

In line with the Declaration, States should ensure that frontline services are adequately funded and targeted to meet the needs of indigenous women and girls and particularly those with disabilities.

By adopting these sorts of measures, the rights of indigenous women and girls will be better protected.

Thank you.