



15th UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)

06 July 2022

Australian Statement

Item 8: Panel discussion on the impact of development projects on indigenous women

Australia is pleased that EMRIP is discussing the intersection of development and indigenous rights. In 2017, Australia led a joint statement encouraging EMRIP to study the international development system and identify practical actions for States to take to ensure that indigenous peoples are not left behind in development projects. Australia repeats this recommendation.

We know that indigenous peoples can experience disproportionate rates of poverty and marginalisation. Social, economic, and political power imbalances, as well as diversity in spoken languages may prevent indigenous peoples from accessing the benefits of the international development system.

Australia has applied an Indigenous peoples safeguards policy for our aid program since 2017. We require that engagement with indigenous peoples occurs throughout the program cycle – from the earliest stages.

Crucially, we require that all indigenous voices are heard, including women and girls. This could include separate consultations with indigenous women’s organisations where appropriate. Further, we seek to ensure that consultations occur in an environment free of manipulation, coercion, and intimidation.

However, national efforts alone are not enough. The diverse and interconnected nature of the international development system demands that States take collective action to ensure that indigenous peoples, in all their diversity, are not ‘left behind’ in development efforts. This is essential to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, which is the agreed global framework for development.

Most donor States cooperate on development efforts through the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee, which sets standards for donor states to strengthen the quality and effectiveness of development projects.

Madame Chair

Could EMRIP elaborate on any engagement it has had with the OECD on improving development practices?