

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
Eighteenth Session**

**New York, 22 April to 3 May 2019**

**Items 4, Indigenous Peoples: Implementation of the six mandated  
areas of the Permanent Forum (Education, Culture, Human Rights,  
Environment, Development, Health)**

**Presented by: Karl Briscoe**

Thank you, Madame/Mister Chair.

(Greetings in KUKU Yalanji)

I would like to start by acknowledging the Traditional Owners where we are meeting today and pay my respects to elders past present and future. I am a proud Kuku Yalanji (Aboriginal) man from the Mossman/Daintree area in Australia and the Chief Executive Officer of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association which is the only Indigenous health profession in the world that has national training curriculum and legislation to supports our membership of over 900 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Health Practitioners in Australia.

I am a recipient of the United National Voluntary fund and recently participated in the Tribal Links Project Access Capacity Training Workshop, which included Indigenous Peoples from seven regions of the world, (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, Pacific, Eastern Europe, Artic) exchanging experiences about the many challenges we are facing, including the Health and Wellbeing of our Indigenous Peoples.

It has been a disheartening five years in Indigenous Affairs in Australia with no real progress being made on constitutional recognition and self-determination. However, we welcome the Australian Governments recently agreed New Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap to shared decision making which provides an opportunity to reaffirm article 23 of the Deceleration for the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising our right to development. As well as having the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health programs and where possible administration of these programs.

The Australian Governments New Partnership Agreement involving Indigenous Peoples also

embeds article 29 of the Declaration for effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of Indigenous peoples are developed and implemented by Indigenous peoples. Accordingly alignment to article 3 of the Declaration it mentions Indigenous States peoples having the right of self-determination.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend to the Australian Government to focus its efforts in progressing constitutional recognition and self-determination with the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in the decision making processes including the allocation of funding to priorities with a particular viewpoint of self-determination as it relates to article 3 of the Declaration.
2. We also recommend to the Australian Government for continual support and expansion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker and Health Practitioner workforces to gain marked improvements of our Indigenous people's health and wellbeing through economic and social conditions outlined in article 21 of the Declaration.

Thank you