



Human Rights Council – 48th session

Item 3 Panel Discussion: The situation of human rights of indigenous peoples facing the COVID-19 pandemic, with a special focus on the right to participation

27 September 2021

Australian Statement

Chair,

Australia thanks the Special Rapporteur for his report on indigenous peoples and COVID-19 recovery.

We note in particular the report talks about the exponential risk of indigenous peoples being overlooked, both in pandemic mitigation efforts and in post-COVID-19 recovery measures. Indigenous women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons are especially at risk.

Australia shares this concern.

Australia is working to administer national COVID-19 vaccinations as quickly as possible, while prioritising Australians in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Australians, people with disabilities and those working in the disability sector across Australia.

As part of our international development cooperation program, Australia is also supporting the International Disability Alliance and the Pacific Disability Forum to support the realisation of human rights for people with disabilities in developing countries, including indigenous peoples.

Can the Special Rapporteur elaborate on how the global response to COVID-19 should take into account the multiple and intersecting issues facing indigenous peoples, including as it relates to age, disability inclusion, gender equality, and sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status?