



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

05 July 2022

Australian Statement

Item 5: Intersessional activities and follow-up to thematic studies and advice

Australia commends the work of the Expert Mechanism and welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this important work.

Australia is committed to implementing the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart in full, including holding a referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice in the Constitution, and establishing the Makarrata Commission to oversee a national process of treaty and truth-telling. The Government is committed to holding a referendum in its current term, subject to discussions with First Nations leaders.

A First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution will give First Nations people in Australia agency to inform decisions that impact their lives. It will be a Voice for First Nations people, run by First Nations people.

The National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap represents a shift in the way governments have previously worked to address disproportionate socio-economic outcomes for First Nations people. First Nations people must determine, drive and own the desired outcomes, alongside all governments. The Partnership's objectives are to enhance outcomes for First Nations people, and to share ownership and responsibility for Closing the Gap.

Australia is progressing early childhood reform through the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy and the Early Childhood, Care and Development Sector Strengthening Plan. These were developed in partnership with SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, and jurisdictional governments to realise improved outcomes for First Nations children.

The Early Childhood Care and Development Policy Partnership will provide the mechanism for a coordinated approach to strengthening and accelerating First Nations early childhood outcomes. The Partnership will work collaboratively across the Australian government and First Nations peoples.

Australia acknowledges the importance of strong links to family, culture, country and community for First Nations children and young people, which can be disrupted through contact with the child protection system. All governments have agreed to work collaboratively to reduce the rate of over-representation of First Nations children through Safe and Supported: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031.

Australia looks forward to welcoming the Expert Members as part of their upcoming country visit.