

Universal Periodic Review

Joint Australian NGO Coalition

Information Booklet

Joint NGO Submission

Australia is due to be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review on 27 January 2011. In July 2010, a coalition of non-government organisations (NGOs) from across Australia prepared a joint NGO submission to the Universal Periodic Review of Australia. The submission was prepared with substantial input and guidance from a high-level NGO Working Group and was endorsed, in whole or part, by 68 organisations.

This Information Booklet has been prepared to assist States, NHRIs and NGOs to participate in the Universal Periodic Review of Australia in order to improve the protection and promotion of human rights on the ground.

The Australian Context

While Australia is a democratic and stable country, fundamental human rights issues have been at the core of national political and social policy and debate in Australia in the last decade. Despite being a constitutional democracy that respects the rule of law, Australia continues to fail to comprehensively incorporate its international human rights obligations into domestic law. Indeed, Australia remains the only developed state in the world without comprehensive constitutional or legislative protection at a national level.

As a result, many of Australia's human rights obligations are not justiciable or enforceable in Australian courts or tribunals. Consequently, many groups in Australian society are unable to enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with others.

The information contained in this Information Booklet documents areas in which Australia is falling short of its international obligations. Information has been prepared relating to the following thematic areas:

1. Constitutional and legislative framework
2. Equality and non discrimination laws
3. Women's rights
4. People with disability
5. Children's rights
6. Sexual and gender identity
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
8. Refugees and asylum seekers
9. Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
10. Administration of justice
11. Housing and homelessness
12. Poverty
13. Mental health care
14. Counter-terrorism
15. Police
16. Prisoners and prison conditions
17. Extra-territorial obligations

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