

MEDIA RELEASE

13 September 2021

Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On 13 September 2007, the General Assembly of the [United Nations adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#), a universal framework that recognises and protects the rights of over 370 million Indigenous peoples in more than 70 countries across the world.

The UNDRIP was drafted by Indigenous Peoples, for Indigenous Peoples - including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. It was created to address the wrongs of the past and is based on the principles of self-determination and participation. The UNDRIP helps combat disadvantage, discrimination and marginalisation and, to eliminate the human rights violations that continue to impact against Indigenous peoples today. It contains minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of all Indigenous peoples.

Australia was one of four countries that initially voted against the UNDRIPs adoption, however in 2009 this position shifted. As a signatory Australia committed to a framework which supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing and fully respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights. A decade has passed since this time and still more still needs to be done to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples rights are recognised.

The stark reality is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are still adversely impacted by systemic racism and discrimination. High rates of incarceration, Deaths in Custody, health inequities inadequate housing and access to culturally safe health care continue to impact adversely on our people's lives. The current rise of COVID-19 infections is also placing the rights, and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at risk. The recent outbreaks in New South Wales has exacerbated and once again confirmed the ongoing issues of food insecurity, inadequate housing, equitable access to health and racism.

Going forward we ask for change - we ask to be involved, to be heard and to be supported. We must keep working together.

The health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will only improve when these rights are embedded as inherent within our institutions and across every level of society.