

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Inquiry into the application of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous
Peoples (UNDRIP) in Australia 2022-2023

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

QoN 001 - 31 October 2022

Topic: Office of Engagement/Ambassador for First Nations people - Contacts approached

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Question

Who exactly has DFAT contacted to ensure that First Nations communities know about the new Office of Engagement with First Nations people and the advertised role of Ambassador for First Nations people?

Please provide a full list of those that have been approached.

Answer

Following the Ministers' media release on 21 September, the department advertised the position in the Koori Mail and National Indigenous Times, and has promoted the position through DFAT social media channels, as well as the National Indigenous Australia Agency social media channels and networks, including Indigenous.gov.au.

The department shared the EOI with 14 peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and outlets to distribute amongst their networks, including:

- Coalition of Peaks
- Indigenous Business Australia
- Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation
- Torres Strait Regional Authority Governance and Leadership
- Torres Strait Islander Community
- Australian Capital Territory Elected Body
- Indigenous Peoples Organisation
- Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Indigenous network
- AIATSIS Prescribed Bodies Corporate network
- Australian Indigenous Doctors Association
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium
- Indigenous Pro Vice Chancellors
- Indigenous Senior Executive Services Secretariat
- Indigenous Champion Network

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QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

QoN 002 - –31 October 2022

**Topic: Relationship between Office of Engagement/First Nations Ambassador and First Nations
Voice to Parliament**

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Question

What will be the relationship between this new Office and the role of the Ambassador to the government's proposed First Nations Voice to Parliament?

Answer

The Ambassador, once appointed, will guide the establishment of the Office of First Nations Engagement, and will help to embed the perspectives, experiences and practices of First Nations Australians into our foreign policy. The Ambassador will establish a process to systematically engage First Nations communities and work in partnership across government agencies and departments to carry out this work.

The Ambassador will strengthen connections between First Nations people and communities of the region, and explain and share insights on the Voice, Treaty, Truth process of the Uluru Statement from the Heart with regional and international partners.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

QoN 003- 31 October 2022

Topic: Funding for Office of Engagement with First Nations people.

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Question

The budget papers only include funding for the new Office for less than two years. Why only this short timeframe and what will happen after that?

Answer

The Portfolio Budget Statement outlined \$2 million over two years (2022-23 to 2023-24)

- . \$1.3 million (2022-23)
- . \$0.7 million (2023-24)

This funding enables the Department to support the appointment of the Ambassador and the early engagement required to design and establish an Office of First Nations Engagement. This work will inform recommendations to Government on budget allocation over the forward estimates.

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QoN 004 – 31 October 2022

Topic: Contribution to implementation of UNDRIP domestically

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Question

DFAT outlines that it has experience promoting UNDRIP internationally. But this inquiry is about how UNDRIP can be implemented here.

What can your contribution to domestic implementation of UNDRIP be?

Answer

The Ambassador for First Nations People, once appointed, will lead Australia's international engagement on Indigenous issues at various UN meetings and forums such as the meeting of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Domestic implementation of UNDRIP is a recurring topic of discussion at these forums. The Ambassador, with support from the Department and the National Indigenous Australia Agency, will share domestic lessons and best practices on promotion and protection of Indigenous rights, progress on domestic implementation of UNDRIP, and shared challenges and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples around the world. This international engagement will help inform the Government's domestic implementation of UNDRIP.

The Department contributes to the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Participation which enables Indigenous representatives to attend UN sessions and have their voices heard.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

QoN 005- 31 October 2022

Topic: Liaison with UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

Question

How are you working with the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

Answer

The Department actively participates in the UN Human Rights Council sessions of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) in July each year, including working with First Nation Australians who attend and Australian expert members. The 15th session of EMRIP was held on 4-8 July 2022, at which Australia delivered five national statements.

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council, and the Western Australian *Save our Songlines* group also attended and delivered statements.

The Department facilitates timely responses to questionnaires from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, other UN special mandate holders and EMRIP, to support their work to advance the rights and concerns of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations Australians.