

Australia Candidature for the United Nations Human Rights Council 2018-2020

Voluntary Pledges

Countries seeking election to the Human Rights Council (HRC) are encouraged to make voluntary pledges about how they will seek to improve human rights – domestically and internationally.

Australia's existing pledges are set out in the table below. At this time, DFAT are looking time to refresh these existing pledges to sharpen their focus and reflect developments since 2015.

In addition, we are exploring new pledges under two specific headings:

- Strengthen and support human rights in the United Nations system; and
- Strengthen and support human rights globally.

Campaign Pillars	Existing Voluntary Pledge
Pillar 1: Gender Equality	<p>Australia will continue to support gender equality throughout our aid program.</p> <p>Australia commits to working collaboratively with other States to encourage equality before the law, reduce violence against women, and promote gender equality.</p> <p>Australia will take measures to eliminate gender-based discrimination and promote policies to increase women's workforce participation.</p>
Pillar 2: Good Governance	<p>Australia will promote and uphold good governance and the rule of law around the world.</p> <p>Australia will continue to promote good governance and strong democratic institutions in Australia, ensuring our public institutions are transparent, accountable and responsive to the needs of Australians.</p> <p>Australia will continue to support developing countries through our aid program to strengthen their public service and develop effective rule of law and justice agencies to ensure public safety and security.</p>
Pillar 3: Freedom of Expression	<p>Australia will underscore the fundamental importance of freedom of expression.</p> <p>Australia will advocate for the protection of journalists, human rights defenders and civil society.</p>

	<p>Australia commits to working with other countries to ensure that individuals are able to enjoy the same human rights online as they do enjoy offline, including freedom of expression.</p>
<p>Pillar 4: Rights of Indigenous Peoples</p>	<p>Australia will work towards a referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Australian Constitution as Australia's First Peoples.</p> <p>Australia will continue to give practical effect to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples Outcome Document.</p> <p>Australia is committed to strengthening the capacity of multilateral system to engage on issues affecting the worlds indigenous peoples.</p> <p>Australia is committed to harnessing the knowledge and expertise of Indigenous Australians in the design and delivery of our aid program.</p>
<p>Pillar 5: NHRI and capacity building</p>	<p>As a Council member, Australia will work with other States to support the implementation of their international human rights obligations.</p> <p>Australia will work to build capacity and strengthen national human rights institutions and civil society, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.</p> <p>Australia will support the efforts of other States to increase awareness of human rights, address human rights violations and abuses, and hold those responsible to account.</p> <p>Australia will continue to advocate in the Human Rights Council, the UN Security Council and the General Assembly for measures which facilitate the early warning of potential mass human rights abuses and appropriate preventative and accountability measures.</p>