



United
Nations
Association
of Australia

AUSTRALIA AND THE UN: REPORT CARD 2013





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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Association of Australia is delighted to launch the second *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card* which evaluates the Australian Government's performance against international laws and norms embedded within the UN system.

Our last *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card* was published in 2007 and marked a point in time when we were highly disappointed with Australia's engagement with the UN. Australia was not actively contributing in the General Assembly, nor working hard to advance the Millennium Development Goals. We were not rising to meet the challenge of climate change and had just staged an intervention in the Northern Territory that the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples later found to be incompatible with Australia's international human rights obligations.

The 2013 *Report Card* focuses on Australia's activities following the publication of the last *Report Card* in 2007 up until the federal election on 7 September 2013.

We are pleased that the 2013 *Report Card* paints a far more positive picture of Australia's contribution to the UN. The UNAA was a strong supporter of Australia's bid for a seat on the UN Security Council and we are proud of the work Australia is doing in the General Assembly and the Security Council to, among other things, limit the catastrophic impact of small arms in conflict zones. Australia's increased commitment to contributing to multilateral forums is also evidenced by our candidacy for membership of the Human Rights Council for the 2018-2020 term – the first time Australia has sought membership. We were also encouraged to see the Australian Government commit to increasing our aid budget to 0.5% of Gross National Income by 2015, though were troubled by the continued delays to this increase.

Our assessment of Australia's performance is not entirely without blemish, however. We have given the Australian Government an 'F' on the topic of refugees and asylum seekers due to the serious questions that remain about the compatibility of government policy with our domestic and international legal obligations. The Australian Government also scores poorly on the issue of climate change given our dependence on fossil fuels and the uncertainties over our commitment to reducing emissions compared to many other developed countries. On peacekeeping and peacebuilding and in the field of human rights we judged Australia to be in a position similar to that of six years ago.

We hope that the *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card* provides those who read it with a clear sense of the way Australia is performing in key areas of multilateral engagement. The UN was formed with the most noble of goals; however the ability of the UN to achieve its mandate can only ever be as strong as the will of member states. It is our job to ensure the Australian Government has a strong will to be a vital contributor to UN forums, a top donor to UN agencies, and a country which promotes and protects international norms and standards at home and abroad.

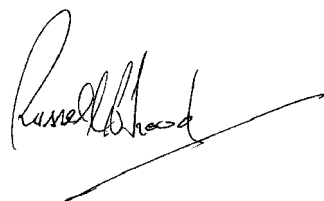
As the new Australian Government works to shape its foreign policy agenda, it is vital that the voices of the Australian community are heard. We encourage all Australians to take time to share their views with the Government on issues such as climate change, international aid, indigenous rights and all of the many other matters that are on the UN agenda. Generally, Australia has a strong history of making a significant practical contribution to improving the way the UN acts to improve the human condition and we look forward to this tradition continuing under the new Government.

In the words of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, "In an era when challenges spill over borders and have global reach, our future depends on how well we work together ..."

We look forward to working with you.



Professor Alex Bellamy
Report Card Editor



Dr Russell Trood
UNAA President



Elizabeth Shaw
UNAA Executive Director

October 2013



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECURITY COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was significant, and a credit to Australia’s diplomacy, that we were elected to the Security Council on the first ballot with 140 votes in October 2012. • Australia plays a positive and constructive role in the UN General Assembly. Of particular note is the role that Australia played with the <i>Arms Trade Treaty</i>. 	A
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT AID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia’s record on overseas aid is very mixed. • In 2012-13 Australia’s official development assistance as a percentage of Gross National Income stood at 0.37%, with Australia ranking 13th out of the 28 countries that make up the OECD Development Assistance Committee. 	B
CLIMATE CHANGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian economy’s dependence on fossil fuel exploitation has grown, and is projected to grow further. • Australia must raise its mitigation ambition, increase its share of international climate finance and develop a transformative national energy policy that can orchestrate a shift towards a low carbon economy. 	D+
DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia has had a mixed history with nuclear weapons and has demonstrated a lack of consistency both internationally and domestically. • The root of Australia’s reluctance to follow through on its commitment to nuclear disarmament is undoubtedly its relationship with the United States. • Australia has been an important player in other areas of arms control, including in particular its efforts on this year’s <i>Arms Trade Treaty</i>. 	B
PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia’s contribution to UN peacekeeping has dwindled since the 1990s. • More recently, Australia has demonstrated a clear preference for deploying forces outside the UN framework. • Australia is the 12th largest donor to the UN’s Peacebuilding Fund and served as a member of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2010. 	B
HUMAN RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia has been a strong advocate across a broad range of issues including promoting the unique and valuable role of national human rights institutions. • The treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia remains one of the most significant human rights challenges. • The unacceptable level of disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is another issue of concern. 	B
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of positive steps have been taken toward implementing the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i>. • The passing of the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Recognition Act 2013</i> unanimously through both houses of Parliament in February 2013 indicates strong bipartisan support for constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples. 	C+
GENDER EQUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia is an active participant in UN Forums on gender equality, including the Commission on the Status of Women and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women Committee. • Gender equality is now a critical cross-cutting theme of Australia’s aid program. • Australia continues to face challenges in the advancement of gender equality. In particular, women still face significant challenges with respect to economic security, leadership opportunities and living free from violence. 	B
REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Pacific Solution began in August 2012. Australia has been legislatively excised from its own migration zone, so that anyone arriving by boat without a visa is liable to be sent (against their will) to Nauru or to Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. • Australia’s response to asylum seekers in the past 12 months has been marked by increasing hostility and a near-total absence of any concern by the major political parties to put the matter in perspective. 	F

GRADE: **A**

SECURITY COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RICHARD WOOLCOTT AC

Australian Ambassador to the UN (1982 – 1988)

Secretary of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (1988 – 1992)

The Australian Mission to the UN has been ably led by Ambassador Gary Quinlan, who played a vital role in securing Australia's election to the Security Council last October. The Mission has been active and productive during the first months of Australia's two year term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, which began on 1 January 2013.

The Security Council is composed of fifteen members; five permanent members (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States) and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. It was significant, and a credit to Australia's diplomacy, that we were elected to the Council on the first ballot with 140 votes last October.¹

Much of the activity of the Council is conducted behind closed doors and is related to seeking consensus on issues amongst its fifteen members. So much of this important work is not reported in the media. The Security Council is at the core of the UN system. It is the only body that can authorise the use of force and the imposition of sanctions. Membership increases a country's profile and influence.

For example, members have regular access to the 'Permanent Five' and can find it helpful to their wider foreign relations to brief friendly regional countries on Security Council activities.

I had the privilege of representing Australia on the Council in 1985–1986, the last occasion on which Australia was a member. I know how the Council works. In the 27 years since my posting to New York, the UN has become larger. It now has 193 members. The global situation is also more complex than it was in the 1980s. The Council's agenda covers virtually every major international crisis and Australian diplomats have proven able to make a constructive contribution. Not since the founding of the UN have we faced such uncertain times. It is in Australia's national interest and an international responsibility to serve on the Council when it can.

The Council's decisions directly affect Australians deployed under the Council's mandates, including in Afghanistan and East Timor. We can also bring to the Council our experience of leading peace operations in Cambodia, Solomon Islands, Bougainville/PNG and East Timor.

How are we performing since we became a member? What are our ongoing objectives? While the Lowy Institute 2013 Poll suggests that 59% of Australians consider our time on the Council will be 'good for Australia' and 64% say it will give Australia more global influence, the wider Australian public is still not as well informed as it should be about the importance and valuable activities of the Security Council.² This is a responsibility a country like Australia must accept in an effort to strengthen a multilateral rules-based international system.

In the Council, Australia is focusing on the link between security and development, the effectiveness of sanctions regimes, improving the protection of civilians in armed conflict, making mandates more effective and watching for opportunities to resolve conflicts before tensions escalate into a serious threat to peace, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation. Australia has been leading the General Assembly progress towards the *Arms Trade Treaty*.

At present Australia is chairing three sanctions committees of the Council on Afghanistan, Iran and Al-Qaeda. Australia also led the negotiations on the renewal of the UN mission in Afghanistan in March 2013 and the UN's response to the terrorist attack on India's compound in Kabul.

I know from my contacts in New York that our representatives have already established a good reputation as strong advocates of humanitarian issues. This is especially so in relation to the crisis in Syria, notwithstanding that the Council has failed to stem the conflict in that country, which is having a destabilising impact on its neighbours such as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. In that respect, Australia advanced proposals to strengthen humanitarian efforts in the Middle East and lend further protection to humanitarian workers there. Australia has also played an important role in advancing Council deliberations on the protection of civilians. Australia is also continuing to pursue counter-terrorism objectives in the Council and is making a practical contribution in strengthening this process.

Afghanistan has been and will remain a priority during our term on the Council. We have played a part in maintaining a strong Council voice to condemn the Taliban's targeting of civilians. We are also fully engaged in the Council's agenda on African issues.

The Council has worked on reshaping the UN's engagement in Mali (on which we worked closely with France), in Somalia on strengthening human rights issues, and we have also been active in promoting the Council's agenda on women, peace and security.

Australia assumed the Presidency of the Security Council on 1 September 2013. This coincided with the federal election, which stymied efforts to use the Presidency to advance consideration of the role of women in peacebuilding, which had been planned for that month.

Overall, I believe that the Australian Mission in New York is working actively and effectively on the range of issues I have described. Flawed as its past performance in a number of areas has undoubtedly been, the UN – and the Security Council at its core – remains the best hope for the global community of nations, especially the smaller and less developed states, in the continuing struggle for a more secure and peaceful world, for wider social justice, for more effective protection of citizens in strife-torn regions and for better living standards for all. We are nearly half way through our membership of the Security Council and it is encouraging to see how well Australia is doing.

Australia also plays a positive and constructive role in the UN General Assembly. Of particular note is the central role that Australia played recently in the evolution of the *Arms Trade Treaty* in the General Assembly. Peter Woolcott, Australia's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, was President of the UN negotiating conference in New York in March 2013, which produced the final text of the treaty. The Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, made a public statement on 18 March 2013 commending Peter Woolcott's diplomatic skills in chairing the process that led to the adoption of the resolution by an overwhelming majority of 154 votes in the General Assembly.

In the UN, Australia will continue to focus on the nexus between peacebuilding and development. Our capacity to do so is strengthened by our experience and by the good standing we have built up since the foundation of the UN. After a decade during which Australia's support for multilateralism and its standing in the UN had declined, the situation has improved markedly and Australia is now an active, productive and positive contributor to the political work of the UN.

1. Australia secures a seat on the United Nations Security Council, Joint media release by the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Prime Minister and Senator the Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 19 October 2012. At http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2012/bc_mr_121019.html 2. Australia and the World, the Lowy Institute Poll 2013, Lowy Institute official website at <http://lowyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institute-poll-2013>

GRADE: B



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT AID

TIM COSTELLO AO
CEO of World Vision Australia

Australia's recent record on overseas aid is very mixed. It has shown commendable improvement in its commitment both to international development and in response to humanitarian emergencies in recent years, yet the overall volume of Australian aid ranks only in the middle of OECD countries. Furthermore, in the past two years there have been signs of wavering in the Labor Government's commitment to reaching an international benchmark on aid volume. In addition there has been a concerning trend to divert aid funds towards the costs of the Government's asylum seeker program. It is also clear that the bipartisan consensus supporting growth in Australian aid has been lost.

Australia agreed, along with all other UN members, to adopt the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2001. Goal 8 sets 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) as the benchmark level of development assistance that developed countries should commit to. However the Howard Government insisted that both the 0.7% target and the use of the MDGs as a measure of aid effectiveness were only aspirational. Hence it was not until 2007 that Australia agreed to use the MDGs as a benchmark in measuring the effectiveness of its own aid program.

As a percentage of GNI, Australia's official development assistance had fallen to 0.23% by 2003-04, a historic low point. In 2005 the Howard Government initiated a review of the aid program, which resulted in a White Paper the following year that laid out new directions and a significant increase in aid volume. After taking office in 2007, the Rudd Government committed to a substantial further increase, to reach a level of 0.5% of GNI by 2015. In 2012-13 the actual level stood at 0.37%,¹ with Australia ranking 13th out of the 28 countries that make up the OECD Development Assistance Committee.² In absolute terms Australia's is the eighth largest aid program.³

The fact that Australia's program has increased is very significant in the context of economic change and the Global Financial Crisis, as several donors – not just the countries most affected by economic downturn but also traditionally generous donors including Canada and the Netherlands – have reduced their aid commitment in the past few years. Nonetheless the Australian commitment remains modest given the country's relatively robust economic health, and compares unfavourably with leading donors such as the Nordic countries, and also with the United Kingdom which has committed to reaching 0.7% of GNI by next year despite being caught in an extended period of very low economic growth.⁴

In each of its last two federal budgets the former Labor Government delayed its target date for the achievement of 0.5%. In addition, in December 2012 and then again in the 2013-14 Budget, a significant amount of Australian aid funds were diverted to cover on-shore costs associated with the government's asylum seeker program. While such expenditure can be counted as Official Development Aid (ODA) under the guidelines set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, most observers in the aid community agree that the scale of this diversion constitutes a substantial cut in the real volume of Australian aid. Indeed, it creates the anomalous situation where Australia has become the third biggest recipient of its own aid. The Labor Government announced a further reduction in aid in August 2013, but maintained that the target date of 2017-18 for achieving 0.5% still stood. However this would require a scale-up of about \$2 billion in the final year, an increase that would be difficult both practically and politically.

On the eve of the 2013 Federal election the Coalition announced that it would strip a further \$4.5 billion from the aid budget over the following four years. It also abandoned commitment to any date for achieving 0.5%.⁵ Effectively this will reduce Australia's commitment to 0.32% by 2017.

“... the Australian aid program has clearly improved not just in scale but also in effectiveness over recent years.”

The series of backward steps by both Labor and the Coalition sends a very negative message to the global community, and especially to Australia's regional partners, about Australia's commitment to achieving sustainable development and reducing poverty. This is especially unfortunate because the Australian aid program has clearly improved not just in scale but also in effectiveness over recent years. This was borne out by the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness conducted with bipartisan support in 2011. The Review identified many areas for improvement but nonetheless found that the program overall was effective in achieving its goals. The review made 39 specific recommendations, almost all of which were adopted by the Government.⁶

During the Labor Government's period in office other significant improvements were made. New partnerships and a greatly streamlined approach to cooperation agreements greatly improved the ability of Australian and international NGOs to deliver aid projects. The government extended the geographical spread of Australia's aid program, including in Africa and the Middle East, while maintaining an appropriate focus on the Asia Pacific region. Education remained the 'flagship' element of the Australian aid program, including an impressive ongoing commitment to improving schools in Indonesia. Considerable effort was made to enhance water and sanitation programs and to promote disability-inclusive development. While significant investment was made in climate adaptation initiatives, progress was stymied by slow global progress both on emissions reduction and climate finance.

The Humanitarian Action Plan delivered in 2011 brought a more coherent strategic-level framework to Australia's approach to humanitarian affairs. The government showed leadership and generosity in contributing to international humanitarian appeals including food crises in East and West Africa, and support for Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries.

Overall the period from 2007 to 2012 can be seen as one in which Australia made substantial progress towards realising an aid program that reflects our capacity and status as one of the world's wealthiest and most secure nations. However in the past two years a series of backward steps, culminating in the Coalition's decision to suspend growth in the aid program, has brought this progress into very serious doubt.



1. Summary of Australia's Overseas Aid Program 2013-14, AusAID official website at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/Publications/Pages/summary-budget-2013-14.aspx> 2. ODA as % of GNI, Preliminary ODA 2012 and trends since 2002, Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD-DAC), OECD official website at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/oda2012-interactive.htm> 3. ODA by Total Volume, Preliminary ODA 2012 and trends since 2002, Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD-DAC), OECD official website at <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/oda2012-interactive.htm> 4. Increasing the effectiveness of UK aid, Department for International Development UK, official website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/increasing-the-effectiveness-of-uk-aid> 5. Hockey's \$9b cuts to hit aid, public service, Mark Kenny, Sydney Morning Herald, September 6, 2013 at <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/federal-election-2013/hockeys-9b-cuts-to-hit-aid-public-service-20130905-2t85t.html#ixzz2gFhwoOfL> 6. Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness, April 2011 at <http://www.aidreview.gov.au/report/index.html>

GRADE: D+



CLIMATE CHANGE

PROFESSOR ROBYN ECKERSLEY

Head of Political Science, School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne

Negotiations under the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 1992* have spanned more than two decades, and have produced diminishing returns. The repudiation of the Kyoto Protocol by the US in 2001 (supported by Australia until 2007) has produced two attempts to draw the US back into the negotiations via a roadmap for a new legal treaty including all major emitters. The first roadmap, launched at Bali in 2007, failed at Copenhagen in 2009, where the parties produced only a non-binding political accord. The second roadmap, launched at Durban in 2011, calls on the parties to negotiate a new legal treaty or other legal instrument to be signed in 2015 and come into effect in 2020. This roadmap also calls on the negotiators to ‘close the ambition gap’ between the non-binding mitigation pledges made at Copenhagen in 2009 and what is required to reduce the risks of dangerous climate change.

> JUDGING AUSTRALIA'S PERFORMANCE

Australia's performance since 2007 is judged relative to other developed countries, bearing in mind the obligations of developed countries to 1)

lead in mitigation under articles 3(1) and 4(2)(a) of the UNFCCC; and 2) provide new and additional finance to enable developing countries to meet their commitments under Article 4(3), as affected by subsequent decisions made by the conferences of the parties. The mitigation effort will also be compared to the range of mitigation targets recommended for developed countries by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The UNFCCC's burden-sharing principles of ‘equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities’ have undergone significant reinterpretation in the light of the rapid growth in emissions of major developing countries, particularly China and India. However, while the rigid binary between developed and developing countries is breaking down in the post-Kyoto phase of the negotiations, and major emerging emitters are now expected to shoulder much greater responsibility, the responsibilities of developed countries have not diminished. Rather, a failure by developed countries to discharge these leadership responsibilities is likely to perpetuate a stand-off with major developing countries and foreclose the possibility of an ambitious new treaty.

> INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE

2007 marked a significant turning point in Australia's engagement with the UN climate regime. Following the federal election in November 2007, the new Rudd Labor Government ratified the Kyoto Protocol as its first act of office. This reversed the decision of the Howard Government to follow the US in repudiating the Protocol on the grounds that it did not include major emitters such as China and India and would harm the Australian economy. Nonetheless, the Howard Government had accepted as a de facto national target the generous allowance it had negotiated at Kyoto in 1997. This target – the second most lenient target among the Annex B parties – allowed Australia to increase its emissions by 8% by 2012 from a 1990 baseline. The ratification by the Rudd Labor Government in 2007 was therefore primarily of symbolic importance in signalling a renewed commitment to multilateralism.

MITIGATION AMBITION

At the Copenhagen conference, Prime Minister Rudd played an active role in participating in the high level segment in the final days, serving as one of the Friends of the Chair. He also used the occasion to announce Australia's unilateral pledge to reduce national emissions by 5% from a 2000 (rather than 1990) baseline by 2020, rising to between minus 15-25% depending on the level ambition of an international agreement involving all major emitters. However, when compared to the 2020 pledges of other developed countries, Australia's target remains among the lowest, and well below the IPCC's recommendation of minus 25-40% for developed countries from a 1990 baseline. For example, the EU has committed to minus 20% but Germany and Denmark have committed to minus 40%, the UK to minus 34%, and Norway (not an EU member) to minus 30%, all from a 1990 baseline. Moreover, the conditions for increasing Australia's mitigation commitments are among the most stringent and are therefore unlikely to encourage ambitious mitigation on the part of major developed countries.

FAST-START CLIMATE FINANCE

At Copenhagen, Australia joined other developed countries in committing to jointly mobilising US\$30 billion of new and additional 'fast-start finance' for the period 2010-2012 to assist developing countries in mitigation and adaptation. This was to form part of a longer term commitment to mobilise US\$100 billion annually by 2020. In June 2012, Australia announced a fast-start finance package of AU\$599 million to be delivered across three financial years

from FY2010/11 to FY2012/13 and roughly balanced between mitigation and adaptation. Although this was a significant increase on international climate assistance, it amounts to only 1.59% of the total share of developed country fast-start climate finance commitments for the period 2010-2012. Climate Analytics has assessed this share as less than half Australia's 'indicative fair share' of 3.3%, which is calculated on the basis of per capita emissions multiplied by total country GDP weighted by the Human Development Index. In late 2012, the government announced it would defer its planned aid budget increases to 0.5% of GNI until 2016-17 and would therefore maintain its ODA commitment at 0.35%; this reduced its commitment to climate change aid to \$172 million for the FY2012/13.²

KYOTO SECOND COMMITMENT PERIOD

Developing countries had insisted at the Durban conference in 2011 that a second commitment period for Kyoto was an essential pre-condition to their commitment to negotiate a new legal treaty by 2015. The Gillard Government's decision to join the EU in committing to a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol for the period 2013-2020 is therefore most welcome, given the refusal by the US, Canada, Japan and Russia to continue with Kyoto. However, Australia has adopted its weak Copenhagen pledge as its Kyoto II target.

UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe



> DOMESTIC PERFORMANCE EMISSIONS TRENDS

Australia's emissions have grown by around 30.7% between 1990 and 2011, excluding emissions from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), with the strongest growth in the electricity sector.³ Nonetheless, under the generous Kyoto accounting rules, Australia is expected to 'over-achieve' on its Kyoto target of 108% by reaching 105% by 2012.⁴ However, the Durban roadmap calls for a significant increase in mitigation commitments by 2015 beyond the pledges made at Copenhagen.

NEW LEGISLATION

The most significant national initiative undertaken to achieve Australia's 2020 target is the 'Clean Energy Future package', enacted in 2011. The centre-piece of this package is the introduction of an economy-wide price on carbon (applying to around 500 of the biggest carbon polluters), beginning with an interim carbon tax starting at \$23 per tonne, followed by a floating price under an emission trading scheme (ETS) from 2015, but with a floor price. The Government later abolished the floor price following its decision to link the Australian ETS with the EU ETS in 2015. From 2015, liable businesses may meet up to 50% of their obligations by purchasing EU or Kyoto allowances under the Clean Development Mechanism (although the latter are restricted to 12.5%) in lieu of investing in emissions reduction activities in Australia. When Kevin Rudd replaced Julia Gillard as Prime Minister in 2013, he announced that he would abolish the carbon tax and bring forward the ETS by one year. This decision, combined with the depressed EU carbon market, would result in much lower mitigation investment in Australia than would have occurred under the original package (with the floor price from 2015).

With the Coalition winning the September 2013 federal election, the carbon price will be abolished and replaced with a Direct Action Plan based on a reverse auction whereby the Government calls for tenders for emissions reductions projects and then 'buys-back' the emissions once the selected projects are completed. Since the financial commitment to fund is capped, so too is the amount of mitigation that can occur.

The Climate Change Authority's (CCA) Caps and Targets Review was expected to recommend new targets in 2014. However, the Coalition is expected to abolish the CCA, and we can expect no increase in ambition before 2015.

Finally, there is a glaring contradiction between Australia's climate and energy policies. In 2009 the Rudd Government increased the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target to 20% by 2020, and both the Rudd and Gillard Governments have provided a welcome range of new initiatives to promote renewable energy, including the \$10 billion commercially oriented Clean Energy Finance Corporation to invest in decarbonisation. However, whereas Denmark's long-term energy strategy is to wean itself from fossil fuels completely by 2050, Australia's National Energy White Paper 2012 envisages Australia playing a continuing role as a major fossil fuel energy producer and supplier to Asia and other 'growth markets.' Australia also continues to provide significant fossil fuel subsidies to both producers and consumers. The International Energy Agency has warned that, in the absence of full-scale carbon capture and storage, no more than one-third of the world's available fossil fuel reserves can be burned to have only a 50% chance of staying below the 2 degree guardrail.⁵ The emissions at home and abroad associated with Australia's national energy policy are likely to use up most of this budget.⁶

> OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Despite a positive shift in direction in climate diplomacy and national policy since 2007, Australia's unconditional mitigation commitment for 2020 remains very weak relative to most other developed countries. Meanwhile, the Australian economy's dependence on fossil fuel exploitation has grown, and is projected to grow further in the short to medium term. Australia must raise its mitigation ambition, increase its share of international climate finance and develop a transformative national energy policy that can orchestrate a shift towards a low carbon economy before it can earn an A or A+ in climate diplomacy and policy.

1. 'Cashing up - At the end of Fast Start Finance: What can we learn for long term finance?' Climate Analytics, 2013. Available at: http://www.climateanalytics.org/sites/default/files/attachments/news/climate%20analytics_faststartfinance_jun13.pdf 2. Summary of Australia's Overseas Aid Program 2012-13, Australian Government/AusAid 2012. At <http://www.aidissues.gov.au/Publications/Pages/summary-budget-2012-13.aspx> and Aid Issues: Climate Change, AusAID, 2013. Available at: <http://www.aidissues.gov.au/aidissues/climatechange/Pages/home.aspx> 3. Australian National Greenhouse Accounts: Quarterly Update of Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory December 2011, Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Commonwealth of Australia, 2012, p. 5. Available at <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/~media/climate-change/emissions/2011-12/NationalGreenhouseGasInventory-QuarterlyReport-December2011.pdf> 4. Ibid, page 15 5. World Energy Outlook 2012: Executive Summary, International Energy Agency (IEA), 2012 6. Unburnable Carbon: Australia's Carbon Bubble, Carbon Tracker Initiative 2013, Carbon Tracker and the Climate Institute. Available at: <http://www.carbontracker.org/australia#>



DISARMAMENT AND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

THOM WOODROOFE

Associate Fellow at the Asia Society

Over the last six years Australia has been an occasionally proactive champion for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, but its lack of consistency on the international stage and in its own domestic context has failed to match its, at times, lofty rhetoric.

In particular, the Australian Government has been a sustained champion and supporter of non-proliferation efforts, but on matters of outright nuclear disarmament it has been a late and feeble contributor. Undoubtedly, this dynamic has been informed by its continued reliance on so-called 'extended nuclear deterrence' whereby Australia relies on the United States for a blanket security guarantee. Despite this, Australia has been an important player in other areas of arms control, including its efforts in helping negotiate the passage of the *Arms Trade Treaty* through the General Assembly this year.

▶ BACKGROUND

Australia has had a mixed history with nuclear weapons. During the 1950s and 1960s, various Ministers and senior officials regularly floated and investigated the possibility of acquiring nuclear weapons from the United States or the United Kingdom primarily to offset our country's limited conventional capability and as a demonstration of Australia's growing international prestige. In addition, and without cabinet approval, from 1957 to 1962 twelve major nuclear tests were conducted by the British on Australian territory and a further 600 'minor trials' were conducted through to 1963.

However, after some initial ambivalence, the Australian Government ratified the newly-established *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* (NPT) in 1973 and ushered in a new era of disarmament advocacy.¹ In the decades to come Australia established the Canberra Commission that explored

the possibility of a total elimination of nuclear weapons globally and ratified the *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty*.

> INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Under the Rudd and Gillard Labor Governments this international advocacy reached new heights. In 2008, on the eve of a visit to Hiroshima, then Prime Minister Rudd hastily convened with his Japanese counterpart the *International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament* (ICNND), chaired by former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans and his counterpart from Japan, Yoriko Kawaguchi. The Commission made a pragmatic case for achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Unfortunately like many of the Labor Government's early and commendable foreign policy initiatives, political support for the Commission was quickly diluted – if not entirely evaporated – and by the time it handed down its findings, the Commission's work was met by nothing more than a press release from the Foreign Minister Stephen Smith which stressed its 'independence.'

Alongside this, Australia's activism at various international forums has waxed and waned. Then Foreign Minister Smith attended the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and Australia's Ambassador for Disarmament Peter Woolcott presided over both the 2009 Conference on Disarmament and the 2012 NPT Review Preparatory Conference where incremental but important progress was made. However at the 2013 NPT Review Preparatory Conference, Australia refused to sign-up to an 80 country statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and attended – but made no intervention at – a separate conference on the issue in Oslo.

For a combination of domestic reasons outlined below and a sense that there is little potential for advancing disarmament, Australia has become increasingly focussed on matters of non-proliferation rather than outright disarmament. Another factor in this is the clear and present danger posed by nuclear terrorism. This helps explain, for example, then Prime Minister Rudd's attendance at the inaugural Nuclear Security Summit in 2010 and Julia Gillard's subsequent trip to the second such gathering two years later. It also helps explain Australia's investment in programs such as the Southeast Asia Regional Security of Radioactive Sources (RSRS) project, to which it had committed more than \$750,000 up until its abrupt withdrawal this year.

In addition, in 2010 Australia helped establish the ten-nation Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)², but its membership includes many predictably conservative United States allies (some of which, including Turkey, may even have Washington's nuclear weapons based on their soil). This has led more progressive countries to worry it will only serve as an unneeded distraction. Indeed, the NPDI's cause celebre has been incremental progress towards disarmament, with a strong dose of non-proliferation in the meantime, despite the fact in many ways the international debate has moved beyond this.

> DOMESTIC CONTEXT

While Australia's performance on the international stage has been at times commendable (though inconsistent), when measured against the domestic context it leaves a lot to be desired. In recent years, Australia has been a late bloomer – and even then a feeble one at best – in terms of its support for an outright ban on nuclear weapons. Australia has lobbied the United States for formal recognition of its nuclear deterrent umbrella expectation, re-started uranium sales to a non-NPT signatory (though the merits of this are debatable), and through government accounts, invested in industries proven to have strong links to the nuclear industry.

Ultimately, a global shift is occurring across progressive governments and the NGO sector towards the concept of a total and outright ban on nuclear weapons through a new convention. And again, while Australia has been a passionate advocate on this in the past, its approach can hardly be deemed consistent. Twice in 2007 before the election of the Labor Government, Stephen Smith committed Australia to 'driving' and not just being a bystander in efforts to establish such a convention. However, following the election the approach shifted to one where a convention (or 'legal frameworks' as the Government prefers to call it) became merely considered a distant goal – a sentiment echoed by a bipartisan motion in the Australian Parliament in May 2012 on nuclear disarmament. In September 2009 a cross-party Parliamentary Inquiry even called on Australia to clarify its position and end its 'open-ended' commitment to disarmament.

The root of Australia's reluctance to follow through on its commitment to nuclear disarmament is undoubtedly its relationship with the United States. As both the 2009 and 2013 Defence White Papers have made clear, Australia relies on Washington for its security guarantee through the notion of an 'extended nuclear deterrence;' that is to say that

if Australia's security was seriously threatened or compromised, the nuclear-armed United States would be seemingly obligated to come to our aid. In 2009, then Australian Ambassador to the United States of America Dennis Richardson even made a submission to the *United States Congress Nuclear Posture Review* calling on them to explicitly confirm this expectation which in his words has assured countries like Australia that 'they do not need to develop their own nuclear weapons.'³

But perhaps the most controversial aspect of Australia's disarmament efforts in recent years has been its decision to reverse an inconsistent ban on uranium sales to India. However, this debate has been misconstrued in a number of ways. Critics were appalled that Australia would consider selling uranium to India (as they had done before and many other comparable countries do) as India is not a signatory to the NPT. Ultimately, Canberra did the right thing for several reasons not least that India only needed the yellow cake for their domestic energy production, and it had become a red button issue in our bilateral relations with the world's largest democracy. Plus of course, the NPT in its current form is largely an archaic instrument that merely monopolises the right to nuclear arms to five countries. Despite this, there is little doubting it was inconsistent with previous highly-strung rhetoric on disarmament, which if anything just reinforced Australia's inconsistency even if it was the right decision at the time.

In more recent years, various NGOs – such as the International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) – have become increasingly focused on government-supported investments in nuclear industries. For instance, in May 2011 ICAN concluded that the Australian Government had invested approximately \$135 million across 15 different companies involved in the production of nuclear weapons through the Future Fund.⁴ ICAN has been calling for an outright divestment akin to the Fund's approach to landmines and cluster munitions. This is yet to occur.

Despite this, Australia has been an important player in other areas of arms control, including in particular its efforts on inking this year's *Arms Trade Treaty*. The Treaty regulates the \$70 billion international

arms industry ranging from handguns to tanks and places export bans on countries that are expected to use them for war crimes or other atrocities. Not only did Australia play a key role in the Treaty's negotiation via its Permanent Representative in Geneva, Peter Woolcott, it then became one of the first countries to sign the Treaty and pledge funds to support its implementation.

> CONCLUSION

While the Australian Government's occasional international advocacy on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has been welcome, its focus and results have varied. In many ways, the most valuable aspect of Australia's performance is its support for third parties such as the ICNND. Meanwhile the domestic performance underpinning this advocacy has been weak and informed by out-dated geopolitical and strategic considerations, rather than a consistent and values-based approach, as our neighbours across the Tasman have long been known for on this issue.



UN Photo/Tobin Jones

1. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade official website at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/security/npt.html>
2. Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Australia and the United Nations, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade official website at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/un/disarmament-and-non-proliferation.html> 3. Australian Government Submission to the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Policy of the United States, Ambassador Dennis Richardson, February 2009 quoted in 'No progress on extended nuclear deterrence in 2013 White Paper,' Richard Tanter, The Strategist (ASPI), 27 May 2013 4. Nuclear Weapons and Australia's Future Fund, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), May 2011

GRADE: B



PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING

PROFESSOR ALEX BELLAMY

Professor of International Security at Griffith University and Non-Resident Senior Adviser at the International Peace Institute, New York

Successive Australian Governments have expressed pride at the country's record in international peacekeeping. Australia has participated in 39 UN peacekeeping operations and 16 non-UN missions. Australia participated in the very first observation mission conducted under the auspices of the UN: the 1947 diplomatic observer mission in Indonesia. During the Cold War, it made a significant contribution to peacekeeping operations in the Middle East (UNTSO). As the Cold War came to an end, the Australian Government – inspired by its activist foreign minister, Gareth Evans – began to view its role in the world in terms of good international citizenship. In quick succession, it provided leadership to the UN mission in Cambodia (UNTAC) and made significant contributions to UNOSOM II (Somalia), UNPROFOR (former Yugoslavia) and UNAMIR II (Rwanda). A change of government and the more general global retreat from UN peacekeeping brought this era to a close in

the mid-1990s. After this time, Australia's only major contribution of troops to UN peacekeeping was to the UNTAET and UNMISSET missions in Timor Leste.

However, since the drawdown of these missions, Australia's contribution to UN peacekeeping has dwindled. By August 2013, Australia – the country with the world's 13th largest defence budget – had slumped to being the UN's 76th largest troop and police contributor.¹ To put that in context, Australia's contribution was almost thirteen times smaller than that of Fiji.

Australia's contribution to UN peacekeeping operations is only part of the story. Australia has made a number of significant contributions to UN-authorized missions including operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, non-UN peacekeeping/stabilisation operations in Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, and humanitarian relief operations in Indonesia. As these operations wind down, Australia will need to

increase its contribution to UN peacekeeping if it is to maintain its score overall in this area. It has also supported peacekeeping capacity-building in Africa and elsewhere and championed critical advances in doctrinal and conceptual thinking, especially in relation to the protection of civilians by peacekeepers, international policing, and civil-military cooperation.

The number of Australian uniformed personnel in UN-led peacekeeping operations has declined sharply in the past decade from an average of around 1,500 to less than 100. This decline can be attributed primarily to the drawdown of UN operations in Timor-Leste (UNTAET and UNMISSET), to which Australia was a major contributor. Since then, Australia's contribution to UN peacekeeping has come primarily in the form of police officers and token military contributions. For example, in August 2013, Australia's contribution consisted of 25 police officers and 33 soldiers distributed across several missions. The largest contributions were to the UN's missions in South Sudan (UNMISS, 25 personnel), Cyprus (15 personnel) and the Middle East (12 personnel).²

Australia's contribution to peace and security through the deployment of forces overseas extends well beyond its contribution to UN peacekeeping. During the same period, Australia demonstrated a clear preference for deploying forces outside the UN framework. Between 2003-5, Australia maintained a relatively large force (peak 550) in the Solomon Islands as part of the Pacific Islands Forum's Regional Assistance Mission (RAMSI). From 2004, it made a significant contribution to UN Security Council-authorized operations in Iraq (peak c.850). From 2006, operations in the Solomon Islands and Iraq were scaled back and Australia made larger contributions to ISAF, reaching a peak of 1,550.³

On average, approximately 2,000 Australian uniformed personnel have been stationed overseas since 2004.⁴ This suggests Australia decided to redirect its troops away from UN-led operations toward other types of operation (especially in the Solomon Islands, Iraq and Afghanistan) but also that

“Although Australia's contribution to peacekeeping might be short on numbers, it is high on quality.”

it has a relatively fixed pool of deployable capability. The Australian Government intends to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014 and plans to begin scaling down operations from 2013.

Although Australia's contribution to peacekeeping might be short on numbers, it is high on quality. The Australian Defence Force and Federal Police have an excellent reputation for providing highly capable and disciplined personnel able to operate in difficult situations. Australia has provided several force commanders – including John Sanderson (UNTAC in Cambodia), Tim Ford (UNTSO in the Middle East), and Peter Cosgrove as well as the UN's senior Police Advisor (Andy Hughes). Australia has the 12th largest assessed financial contribution to UN Peacekeeping and makes significant additional contributions.

Whilst Australia's contribution to peacekeeping has been patchy, its performance in peacebuilding has been more wholly positive. In addition to its long-standing commitment to supporting peacebuilding in Timor Leste and the Solomon Islands, Australia is a committed contributor to UN peacebuilding efforts. It is the 12th largest donor to the UN's Peacebuilding Fund and served as a member of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in 2010. In addition, Australia made a series of voluntary contributions to support the peacebuilding initiatives in Africa identified as priorities by the UN Peacebuilding Commission. One example cited by the government is Burundi, where Australia provided support for the conduct of free and fair elections in 2010. Australia has also contributed to peacebuilding priorities identified by Sierra Leone in its agriculture sector. The expected reduction in Australia's foreign aid budget might lead to a weakening of this performance in the years to come.

1. Ranking of military and police contributions, UN Peacekeeping, at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>

2. Contributions by country, UN Peacekeeping, at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml> 3. Australia's Involvement in Peacekeeping Operations, Final Report of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade (August 2008), page 4 4. The Military Balance 2012, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London: Routledge, 2012

UN Photo

> HUMAN RIGHTS

PROFESSOR GILLIAN TRIGGS

President of the Australian Human Rights Commission

Under international human rights law States assume obligations and duties to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. The *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card* provides us with an important opportunity to reflect upon Australia's performance within the UN, and examine the measures it has taken to further protect and promote human rights in Australia. This report is a celebration of achievements, but also reminder of what must be done to ensure that Australia lives up to the human rights commitments it has made.

Australia played a significant role in the formation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the foundation of the UN more broadly. The extent of Australia's involvement was largely due to the influential leadership of Dr Herbert Vere Evatt (also referred to as Doc Evatt), who was President of the UN General Assembly at the time the Universal Declaration was unanimously adopted.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration in 1948, Australia has continued to fulfil its role as a good global citizen and remained a supporter of human rights throughout international treaty negotiations. Australia has actively participated in an array of UN forums on human rights, such as the treaty body committees and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. In June 2013, Australia announced its candidacy for membership of the Human Rights Council for the 2018-2020 term. This is the first time Australia has

sought membership of the Council and is an important indication of Australia's commitment to human rights protection and promotion.

At the international level, Australia has been a strong advocate across a broad range of issues including promoting the unique and valuable role of national human rights institutions.¹

Australia is a party to seven of the core human rights treaties. Under these treaties, the Australian Government is obligated to take positive steps to ensure that people are able to enjoy their human rights. The Government is also obliged to avoid taking any action which may breach human rights and fundamental freedoms. During Australia's UPR appearance, a number of countries raised concerns about Australia's reservations against all treaties and also recommended the Government consider further ratifications.² In 2012, the Australian Government made a commitment to review its reservations under a number of human rights treaties.³

Although many of the core treaties have been ratified, Australia is yet to ratify the *Optional Protocol on the Convention against Torture* (OPCAT). The ratification and implementation of OPCAT is significant in that it will establish a national system of monitoring, ensuring that appropriate safeguards against torture exist in all places of detention.

Despite Australia's extensive role in shaping the international human rights framework, within the domestic sphere many challenges remain. Inconsistencies between Australia's obligations and its implementation persist. In Australia, there is no explicit domestic legal obligation for human rights to be protected, unless parliament has incorporated a human rights treaty into domestic legislation. A comprehensive *Human Rights Act* at the federal level would guarantee that Australia's human rights obligations are implemented within its domestic legal framework.⁴

Since the last *Report Card* the Australian Government has demonstrated a clear commitment to promoting human rights within Australia. On 21 April 2010, the Australian Government launched Australia's Human Rights Framework. The Framework sets out a range of measures to help ensure that Australia gives effect to its international human rights obligations, placing particular emphasis on education and on greater Parliamentary scrutiny. The Parliamentary scrutiny process is an important part of the Human Rights Framework. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights was established in January 2012, its role is to examine all Bills (and legislative instruments) introduced into the Federal Parliament to assess their compatibility with Australia's international human rights obligations. Since its establishment the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights has provided advice to Parliament about human rights concerns on range of issues such as procedural fairness, reviewability of decisions, freedom of expression (in relation to media reform) as well as welfare payments for single parents.

An additional component of the Human Rights Framework is the National Action Plan (NAP), which was launched in December 2012 after a period of extensive consultation. This is an important development as it articulates how the Australian Government will implement the commitments it made during its UPR, and provides a direct link between the international system and the domestic legislative and policy framework. The broad scope of the NAP is particularly welcomed; however we have seen slow implementation across many areas. Absence of benchmarking and clear indicators also means that it is difficult to provide a rigorous basis for assessing long term progress.

“While the Australian Government has made commendable strides in a number of areas, respect for human rights within Australia is far from perfect.”

While the Australian Government has made commendable strides in a number of areas, respect for human rights within Australia is far from perfect. The treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia remains one of the most significant human rights challenges. Although we have seen some improvements, such as the increased use of community arrangements for asylum seekers and refugees, the number of people in closed detention, particularly children remains of deep concern.⁵ As President of the Australian Human Rights Commission I have expressed ongoing concern for refugees who have received adverse security assessments and remain held in indefinite detention.

The transfer of asylum seekers who have arrived by boat to third countries for processing of their claims presents a number of challenges and creates a significant risk that Australia may breach its human rights obligations. Under international law, Australia has an obligation to protect the human rights of all asylum seekers and refugees who come to Australia, regardless of their mode of arrival.⁶

The unacceptable level of disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is another issue of concern. We have seen a distinct lack of progress in implementing the *UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* at the domestic level, indicating that there is a clear need to improve partnerships with Indigenous peoples to give full effect to the Declaration.

Australia should be proud of its record of supporting and developing international human rights law, yet as Eleanor Roosevelt famously remarked, ‘human rights begin at home.’ In Australia, closing the ‘implementation gap’ is crucial for all human rights work today; only then will rights become a reality.

1. The Australian Government has led a number of resolutions at the Human Rights Council on National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. See National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, Human Rights Council Resolution 23/L.15, UN Doc A/HRC/23/L.15 (2013); National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights, Human Rights Council Resolution 20/L.15, UN Doc A/HRC/20/L.15 (2012) 2. Universal Periodic Review Recommendations 1–16 3. Australia's National Human Rights Action Plan 2012, item 3, page 7. At <http://www.ag.gov.au/consultations/pages/NationalHumanRightsActionPlan.aspx> 4. In 2009, the UN Human Rights Committee stated that it was ‘concerned that the rights to equality and non-discrimination are not comprehensively protected in Australia in federal law’ and recommended that Australia ‘adopt Federal legislation, covering all grounds and areas of discrimination to provide comprehensive protection for the rights to equality and discrimination,’ see UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations: Australia (2009), paragraph 12 5. As of 31 May there were 8,521 people in immigration detention facilities, which include 1,731 children. Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Immigration Detention Statistics, at <http://www.immi.gov.au/managing-australias-borders/detention/facilities/statistics/> 6. 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, article 31

GRADE: C+



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

COMMISSIONER MICK GOODA

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner

In accepting the offer to contribute to the *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card* on Indigenous Issues, I wanted to reflect on some of the key human rights issues that we face within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. With that in mind, the focus of my report will be on Australia's performance in implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Declaration) since it provided its support on 3 April 2009.

The adoption of the Declaration by the General Assembly of the UN in September 2007 was the culmination of more than 20 years of negotiation between Indigenous peoples and governments of the world. The adoption strengthened and reinforced the international human rights framework as it relates to Indigenous peoples.

The Declaration enshrines our right to be different as peoples and affirms the minimum standards

for the survival, dignity, security and well-being of Indigenous peoples worldwide while at the same time confirms our right to determine our future development. Importantly, it is also seen as an instrument to reset the relationships between government and Indigenous peoples. This is reinforced in its Preamble, where the General Assembly says that:

...this Declaration will enhance harmonious and cooperative relations between the State and indigenous peoples, based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination and good faith;¹

States should...effectively implement all their obligations...in consultation and co-operation with the peoples concerned;²

It is...a standard of achievement to be pursued in a spirit of partnership and mutual respect.³

In moving towards the full implementation of the Declaration in Australia through laws, policies and programs, we must ensure that Indigenous rights and interests are placed front and centre of Australian nationhood and embedded in the institutional fabric of the country – by recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our Constitution.

Constitutional reform is an opportunity to reset and build relationships.

A referendum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution is an opportunity to redefine our national identity based on recognition, respect and inclusion and to redefine the role of government in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' lives.

The passing of the *Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Act* unanimously through both houses of our National Parliament in February 2013 indicates strong bipartisan support for constitutional reform. The Act has a two year sunset clause from the date of proclamation. We now have a timeline for the holding of the referendum but we must ensure that the momentum is maintained towards constitutional change.

2013 saw a breakthrough in terms of making the Declaration a reality here in Australia. At the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in May this year, the Australian Government and my office delivered a Joint Statement, which saw the Australian Government provide its commitment to:

... assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve improved outcomes ... [and] working with the Australian Human Rights Commission and the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples to increase awareness of, and encourage dialogue about, the Declaration in policy development, program implementation and service delivery as a way to embed the Declaration in how business is done....⁴

I welcomed these announcements by the Australian Government and am pleased to note that Commonwealth Government agencies are increasingly referencing the Declaration as part of this process. I also welcomed the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights in terms of their oversight of the requirement for new legislation to be accompanied by a statement setting out how the law complies with Australia's international human rights obligations.

Unfortunately, towards the end of the 2012/13 year, the Northern Territory Government introduced

“A referendum to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution is an opportunity to redefine our national identity based on recognition, respect and inclusion...”

legislation to deal with the effects of alcohol abuse in that jurisdiction. If passed unamended, this will criminalise what is framed in the legislation as a health issue and will return to the days when public drunkenness was addressed in the criminal justice system rather than the health system. Under the proposed laws, there is also a possibility that a person could be held for up to 13 days without charge. This is a direct repudiation of one of the main recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, handed down over 22 years ago.⁵

Whilst the proposed legislation is not explicitly aimed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, I have no doubt that the overwhelming effect will be just that, the targeting of a group of who need evidence-based help to overcome a debilitating addiction rather than just being locked up and subject to treatments untested by credible research.



UN Photo/Devra Berkowitz

Other aspects of the Australian Government's policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been criticized by UN officials and bodies working in the area of human rights. For example, in 2009, the UN's Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Affairs noted that there appeared to be a prima facie case that the suspension of Australia's *Racial Discrimination Act* to enable the Northern Territory "intervention" was discriminatory and therefore in contradiction to Australia's international legal obligations in this area.

During her May 2011 visit to Australia, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, expressed her deep concern at the so-called "intervention" and called for a fundamental rethink, saying:

*"In my discussions with Aboriginal people, I could sense the deep hurt and pain that they have suffered because of government policies that are imposed on them. I also saw Aboriginal people making great efforts to improve their communities, but noted that their efforts are often stifled by inappropriate and inflexible policies that fail to empower the most effective, local solutions. I would urge a fundamental rethink of the measures being taken under the Northern Territory Emergency Response. There should be a major effort to ensure not just consultation with the communities concerned in any future measures, but also their consent and active participation. Such a course of action would be in line with the UN Declaration [on Indigenous Peoples]."*⁶

Addressing the human rights challenges that we currently face is about settling the foundations into place to ensure sustainable outcomes for the future.

The Declaration when viewed through the lens of its key rights and principles can be an instrument to build relationships. It provides a framework for engaging on issues and for setting a pathway of action. It emphasises process and participation that ensures equality and non-discriminatory treatment. The Declaration should form the foundation of a new relationship built on respect and engagement between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

> CONCLUSION

Given that one of my duties is to monitor and promote the exercise and enjoyment of human rights by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, I have made the implementation of the Declaration a priority for the time I will spend in this position. I have done this because action to implement international human rights commitments and obligations into national laws, policies and programs for the benefit of Indigenous peoples remains a challenge in Australia.⁷

I believe that the Declaration provides a roadmap to address that challenge, but there is still much to do.

I remain committed to working with the Australian Government to give effect to the Declaration to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to fully realise, exercise and enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms as set out in the Declaration and in turn effect positive change within our communities.

1. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, preambular paragraph 18 2. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, note 1, preambular paragraph 19 3. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007, note 1, preambular paragraph 24 4. Joint Statement by the Australian Government and the Australian Human Rights Commission on Agenda Item 7 (Delivered at the 12th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York, 20-31 May 2013) 5. Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, National Report, AGPS, 1991, Vol 3 6. Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, Canberra, 25 May 2011 7. Mick Gooda, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Panel and Interactive Dialogue on 'The role of the UN and Regional Mechanisms as well as National Human Rights Institutions in advancing the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' (delivered at the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Geneva, 11 July 2013)



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

> GENDER EQUALITY

JULIE MCKAY

Executive Director, Australian National Committee for UN Women

While there remain many challenges facing women in Australia, there is evidence that during the period under review Australia has taken significant steps to promote and adhere to international norms and standards as they relate to gender equality.

> INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Australia is an active participant in UN forums on gender equality, including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee. At the CSW in 2013, in addition to making strong country statements, this year Australia hosted official side-events on engaging men and boys in preventing violence against women and on using technology and social media to address violence against women. Australia has committed to funding NGO delegates to participate on the Government Delegation to CSW and maintains a commitment to ensuring that its national human rights institution participates through Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick.

Australia tabled its 6th and 7th periodic reviews to the CEDAW Committee in 2010 and provided \$100,000 in funding to the NGO sector to facilitate a shadow reporting process. The Shadow Report enables the NGOs of the country being reviewed to participate in the formal UN Committee review and ensure that any issues that the Government doesn't raise are included. This demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that the NGO sector has its voice heard by the Committee. The CEDAW Committee's recommendations were widely publicised by the NGO sector and an updated report was tabled by Australia on time.

In its review of the situation in Australia, the CEDAW Committee noted that more focus needed to be placed on the high rates of violence against women and girls and the challenges facing Aboriginal women.¹ The CEDAW Committee also recommended that Australia undertake a comprehensive assessment of the situation of women with disabilities in Australia. To date this review has not been done. While there is a lack of data relating to the types and rates of violence

affecting women with disabilities, research suggests that women living in institutions face significant issues of violence.² Concerns about non-therapeutic sterilisation of women and girls with a disability have been raised during Australia's first periodic review by the UN Human Rights Council and to the CEDAW Committee. Both the CEDAW Committee and the Committee on the Rights of the Child have called on the Government to enact national legislation prohibiting the practice, except where there is a serious threat to life. To date this legislation has not been developed. In July this year, a Senate Inquiry did recommend that Australia develop tighter laws to protect women with disabilities from forced sterilisation.³

Gender equality is now a critical cross-cutting theme of Australia's aid program, with Australia's approach outlined in more detail in the Gender Thematic Strategy. Three of the ten development objectives of the aid program specifically address gender equality and women's empowerment. Australia was a key supporter in the establishment of UN Women in 2010 and now has a multi-year funding agreement in place. Core funding to UN Women has increased from \$1.2 million in 2006-07 to \$16.2 million in 2011-12 in this period. Australia was the first country to provide multi-year funding to UN Women.

Recognising that advocacy and representation are critical to the advancement of gender equality, the Australian Government has created a Global Ambassador for Women and Girls. The role has the mandate of ensuring that the needs of women and girls are properly met in Australia's aid program and foreign policy. Australia continues to fund the National Women's Alliances to provide a mechanism for NGOs to influence government policy-making processes and collectively advocate for various policy issues. The effectiveness of these Alliances is yet to be reviewed, however anecdotally they provide a useful avenue for policy advice and advocacy.

> DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTATION

Under the former Labor Government, Australia introduced its first Paid Parental Leave scheme, entitling eligible parents up to 18 weeks paid leave at minimum wage. While a positive first step, the current scheme does not include superannuation or 'at salary' pay which continues to have an impact on women's long-term economic security in Australia. The International Labor Organisation recommends that governments pay women 14 weeks leave at full pay with full entitlements.

In 2013, former Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced new laws to make servitude, forced labour, forced

marriage and organ trafficking criminal offences. Slavery and people trafficking were already considered crimes in Australia, however these laws provide more detail about some key issues affecting women and girls, including the need for ethical procurement guidelines to be enforced. It is hoped that the new laws will also make it easier for people who have suffered these crimes to obtain financial compensation.

Australia has been internationally recognised for the development of its National Action Plan to reduce violence against women and their children, launched in 2012. After a comprehensive review process, the Plan has had endorsement by the Commonwealth and all State Governments. Initiatives funded under the plan include: DV Alert, a national telephone counseling service and the recent announcement of the formation of a National Foundation for ending violence against women. Funding for the domestic violence service sector remains low, with demand continuing to outweigh supply in many areas. A national mapping exercise of both demand and service provision is needed to ensure that services are meeting needs.

In 2012 Australia announced its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. The UN has called on all Member States to develop a plan, and Australia's commitment to the Security Council campaign seems to have accelerated progress. The Plan is a useful first step in describing the initiatives which relevant government agencies must look at in order to implement the Security Council resolutions related to women, peace and security. The Plan was announced with no new funding attached and has been criticised for not identifying tangible outcomes and appropriate measurements. One year after the release of the Plan, the National Committee for UN Women, WILPF, ACFID and the Gender Institute at ANU conducted a roundtable session to review its implementation. It seemed at the time that many government agencies were not fully aware of their obligations under the Plan. Since then, however, momentum around implementation and reporting has increased.

Australia continues to face challenges in the advancement of gender equality. In particular, women still face significant challenges with respect to economic security, leadership opportunities and living free from violence. The gender pay gap has widened to 17%, with a gap of 28.3% being recorded in management ranks in the ASX200.⁴ Some progress towards pay equity was made through the Australian Services Union's test case in Fair Work Australia, testing fair pay for community sector workers. Fair Work Australia found that

“Women still face significant challenges with respect to economic security, leadership opportunities and living free from violence.”

community sector works are being undervalued and that gender has been important in creating that pay gap. It awarded pay rises of between 19% and 41% but ruled to phase-in the pay increases over eight years. While the case was successful, concerns have been raised by NGOs about how the gap will be funded and what this means for an already under-funded community sector.

Women are under-represented in political, corporate and organizational leadership roles, and despite some progress towards increasing the number of women on the boards of major businesses, the impact of these programs on supporting more women into management and leadership roles and improving workplace culture is still unknown.

Violence against women remains a major concern in Australia. High rates of violence across Australia, but in particular in regional and rural areas and in indigenous communities, continue to be reported. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 45 times more likely to experience domestic violence than non-Aboriginal women. Women with disabilities and women from immigrant and refugee backgrounds also face significant challenges accessing domestic violence services.

Sexual harassment continues to be a major problem in Australian workplaces and traditional views of women’s roles, based on stereotypes continue to challenge cultural change in many organisations. A telephone survey conducted by the Human Rights Commission in 2012 found that 25% of women and 16% of men reported having experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past five years.⁵

> CONCLUSION

Many challenges continue to face Australian women, and this brief summation of Australia’s performance at the UN in relation to gender issues could not possibly

detail all of these. It would be fair to say that there has been significant attention on gender issues in recent years. Australia has taken some key steps towards ensuring that it is implementing international norms and standards and raising public awareness about the issues. Australia should be commended for its commitment to working with civil society on gender issues. Focusing on the experience of marginalized women and ensuring adequate funding is allocated to the advancement of gender equality and the implementation of policies which affect women will be critical if Australia is to attain an A in this area.

UN Photo/Martine Perret



1. CEDAW Committee Concluding Comments 2010 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N10/485/48/PDF/N1048548.pdf?OpenElement>
2. Zero Tolerance for Sexual Assault: A Safe Admission for Women (2013), Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council <http://www.vmiac.org.au>
3. Reported in ABC News, Barrett 2013 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-07-17/senate-inquiry-calls-for-court-approval-for-forced-sterilisation/4826728>
4. Workplace Gender Equality Agency 2013 <http://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/2013-02-Gender%20pay%20gap%20statistics.pdf>
5. Working without Fear: Results of the Sexual Harassment National Telephone Survey 2012, Australian Human Rights Commission 2012



UN Photo/Mark Garten

> REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

JULIAN BURNSIDE AO QC
Barrister and human rights advocate

In the last *Australia and the United Nations: Report Card*, Australia scored a D for “global movement of people.” Since then, although Australia has become a major donor to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), providing some \$50 million in contributions, its policy overall on this issue has gotten worse. In August 2013, the UN’s Human Rights Committee found 150 breaches of the *International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights* in the government’s treatment of 46 asylum seekers, which “cumulatively inflict[ed] serious psychological harm.”¹ Following the election of the Coalition government, it is very likely that Australia’s approach to asylum seekers will harden further.

Australia’s response to asylum seekers in 2012-2013 has been marred by three features in particular.

> FIRST: FEAR AND LOATHING

The political debate in Australia reveals a heightened sense of concern because the number of unauthorised boat arrivals has increased. To put this in perspective, the average arrival rate between 1990 and 2001 was about 1,000 people per year. In 2001 (the year of the Tampa episode) the arrival rate was about 4,000. In the financial year ending 30 June 2013, the arrival rate was approximately 25,000. If history is any guide, about 90% of the unauthorised arrivals will prove to be entitled

to refugee status.² This level of unauthorised arrivals in a year has to be measured against our population (23 million), our natural population growth rate (about 7,000 per week), and our usual migration intake (about 200,000 per year).³ In addition it has to be assessed in light of our significant economic prosperity. In the late 1970s, Australia received about 25,000 Indo-Chinese refugees per year, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. It was done with bipartisan support and caused little trouble or anxiety. The population was smaller then, and we were less prosperous than now.

Nevertheless, neither of the major parties has tried to advance a policy which recognises the relative insignificance of the arrival rate. Neither of them has tried to explain to the public the human realities which impel people to seek asylum. The Labor Government reintroduced the “Pacific Solution” and did nothing to take the political heat out of the issue. The Coalition continues to refer to asylum seekers as “illegals” and promises to “turn back the boats” following their election in September. In short, both major political parties headed to the 2013 Federal election with almost identical refugee policies: a commitment to prevent boat arrivals. Both major political parties pursued electoral success by promising increasingly harsh measures directed at deterring asylum seekers from coming to Australia by boat.

“Both major political parties pursued electoral success by promising increasingly harsh measures directed at deterring asylum seekers from coming to Australia by boat.”

> SECOND: THE NEW PACIFIC SOLUTION

The Labor Government’s New Pacific Solution began in August 2012. Australia has been legislatively excised from its own migration zone, so that anyone arriving by boat without a visa is liable to be sent (against their will) to Nauru or to Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. At some time, either before or after their arrival in Nauru or PNG, the asylum seekers are granted visas, although they remain unaware of that fact. The visas may only be applied for by Australian officials, ostensibly on behalf of the asylum seekers.

Although Nauru and PNG both have a Constitutional Bill of Rights which guarantees personal liberty, all asylum seekers sent there are held in detention centres (officially “Regional Processing Centres”) pursuant to the terms of visas which they are given. Australian contractors run the detention centres. Australia pays the entire cost of the detention and processing arrangements.

The arrangements between Australia and Nauru are governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed on 29 August 2012. It provides for asylum seekers to be sent from Australia to Nauru; for their asylum claims to be processed there; and if a person is found to be a refugee, Australia has the obligation to find a resettlement country for the refugees. However, there is a catch. The New Pacific Solution was announced as part of the implementation of a “no advantage principle.” The Australian Immigration Minister said that asylum seekers who arrive in Australia without authority would not gain any advantage over those who come by orthodox means. People transferred to Nauru are told (by Australian Immigration officials) that they need to wait and see how the ‘no advantage’ principle applies to their case, and that they may have to wait up to five years for resettlement, regardless of when their refugee status is confirmed. The MOU between Australia and Nauru contemplates that the “no advantage principle” will be applied to people held there, before Australia

resettles them. It is likely that the arrangements between Australia and PNG are governed by a similar MOU.

Australia’s new policy is said to be motivated by a concern to prevent people dying at sea as they make the dangerous voyage from Indonesia to Australia. However the policy operates on people after the perils of the sea have passed. The policy is thus aimed at deterring people from embarking in the first place; that is, deterring them from seeking protection in Australia at all.

The New Pacific Solution, as it presently operates, thus involves the forcible removal of asylum seekers from Australia to Nauru (or PNG) and (so far) a denial of the Constitutional right to freedom in Article 5 of the Nauruan Constitution and Article 42 of the PNG Constitution. In short, the new New Pacific Solution has the hallmarks of people trafficking.

In late July 2013, the Labor Government turned up the heat on this issue, announcing deals that would have asylum seekers who arrive in Australia by boat being removed to Papua New Guinea or Nauru where they would be processed and resettled, thereby shifting to those countries the entire burden of boat arrivals.

> THIRD: ADVERSE ASIO ASSESSMENTS

The Australian Secret Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) has the power to provide security assessments in relation to individuals. If they assess a person adversely, the consequences depend on who the person is. If the person is an Australian citizen, their passport will be cancelled. If they occupy any sort of sensitive government position, they are likely to lose it. If they are a refugee, they will be refused a visa. If that happens, the *Migration Act* says that they must remain in detention until they get a visa or they are removed from Australia. There is the crunch for people already assessed as refugees: they are lawfully entitled to protection in Australia, but they are not given a visa. They cannot be sent back to the country they have fled, because that would necessarily amount to refoulement, which is expressly prohibited by international law.

In practice, that means that a refugee who is adversely assessed faces a life in prison-like environment without having committed any offence, and without being told the reason for the adverse assessment.

There are about 50 refugees in detention in Australia at present. Some of them have been in detention for

as long as four years.⁴ While there is presently a review process on foot, the reviewer has to be told what “new information” should inform the review. That is logically impossible since neither the refugee nor their representative is allowed to know what information was used in the first place to justify the adverse assessment. An adverse assessment can be made on grounds which do not involve the person being any threat to Australia’s security. A person can be adversely assessed if they may be a risk to the security of another country, or if they may have a connection to people smuggling. In some cases, it is possible to make an educated guess about the foundation of the adverse assessment. In several, the person had a former connection to the Tamil Tigers. That fact was the foundation of their (accepted) asylum claim. It is then used to suggest that (if the person returned to Sri Lanka) they would be a risk to the security of Sri Lanka. Thus we have the novelty of Australia accepting that it owes a person protection, but using the same facts to imprison the person indefinitely without charge, without trial and without explanation.

In another case, the refugee has a relative who is being held in Indonesia on suspicion of involvement

in people smuggling. That connection is (apparently) being used to justify holding the refugee in detention indefinitely, in conditions which the Government agrees will likely cause him to continue attempting suicide.

“... serious questions remain about the compatibility of current policy with the government’s domestic and international legal obligations.”

> CONCLUSION:

Australia’s response to asylum seekers in the past 12 months has been marked by increasing hostility and a near-total absence of any concern by the major political parties to put the matter in perspective. Aspects of proposed legislation on asylum seekers have already been struck down by the High Court of Australia and serious questions remain about the compatibility of current policy with the government’s domestic and international legal obligations.

1. The Committee’s decisions can be found here: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=13648&LangID=E> 2. Australia’s offshore humanitarian program 2012–13, Department of Immigration and Citizenship 3. 3101.0 - Australian Demographic Statistics, Mar 2013, Australian Bureau of Statistics 4. *Immigration Detention Statistics*, at <http://www.immi.gov.au/managing-australias-borders/detention/facilities/statistics/>

METHODOLOGY

The grade given for each area of assessment was calculated based on a standardised grading matrix. This matrix required authors to assess Australia's performance across a number of key criteria, including participation in forums, adherence to UN norms and standards, upholding treaty obligations and relevant aid contributions. Authors awarded scores in six categories, which were averaged with the scores awarded by the Editor to arrive at a final grade.

The following grading matrix was used.

1 Extent to which Australia has been active in UN forums on the relevant topic of the submission.	0 Not at all	1 Very passive	2	3 Moderate activity	4	5 Very active
Mark out of 5 according to how you assess Australia's activity.						
2 Has Australia signed up to key declarations/ conventions/ agreements on the relevant topic of the submission, especially if any have been adopted over the past 3 years?	0 Not at all	1 Very passive	2	3 Moderate activity	4	5 Very active
Mark out of 5						
3 Has the Australian Government actively supported this issue/ reacted to concern in the Australian community through complementary legislation, raising public awareness or supported Australian organisations active in the field?	0 Not at all	1 Very passive	2	3 Moderate activity	4	5 Very active
Mark out of 5						
4 Has the Australian Government acted in a manner that is inconsistent with any UN rules, conventions or commitments on the relevant topic of the submission?	-5 Very inconsistent	-4	-3 Moderately inconsistent	-2	-1 Some minor inconsistencies	0 No inconsistency
Mark out of -5						
5 Has the Government introduced legislation (or is planning to do so) that is inconsistent with UN conventions in this area? Has the Government sought to undermine any UN commitments on this issue/ concern, by public advocacy against an agreed UN convention/ position on this issue/concern?	-5 Actively undermines	-4	-3 Moderate undermining	-2	-1 Little amount of undermining	0 No undermining present
Mark out of -5						
6 Has Australia contributed its share of funding to the relevant topic of the submission? Has Australia contributed to relevant funds/ agencies in this area?	0 Contributes the bare minimum required	1 Contributes a small amount more	2	3 Contributes a moderate more	4	5 Contributes a great deal more than required
Mark out 5						
TOTAL						

There were a total of 20 points available for positive behaviour and 10 points that could be subtracted for poor behaviour.

The final grade was awarded on the basis of the total calculation according to the following:

A+ = 19 - 20	B+ = 15 - 16	C+ = 11 - 12	D+ = 7 - 8	F = 0 - 4
A = 17 - 18	B = 13 - 14	C = 9 - 10	D = 5 - 6	

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Richard Woolcott is a former diplomat and highly regarded commentator on Australia and international affairs. Mr Woolcott was Australian Ambassador to the UN from 1982 to 1988, and served as the President of the UN Security Council for Australia's term in November 1985. Mr Woolcott served as Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the most senior diplomatic posting in Australia, from 1988 to 1992.

> TIM COSTELLO AO

Tim Costello is widely recognised as a leading expert on social justice, global poverty and development issues. In 2005 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for service to the community through contributions to social justice, health and welfare issues, international development assistance, and to the Baptist Church. Mr Costello is currently the CEO of World Vision Australia.



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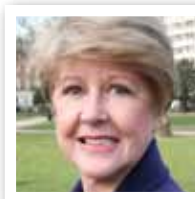


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We are particularly grateful to the authors who have contributed to the *Report Card* this year and thank them for their time and generosity.

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> WITH THANKS

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