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of Australia



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Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
softpowerreview@dfat.gov.au

DFAT Soft Power Review

Please find enclosed the UNAA's submission for the Australian Government's review of the critical role of soft power in advancing Australia's contribution to the rules-based international order.

The UNAA believes soft power is extremely relevant and cost-effective, and judiciously applied will better enable Australia to:

- contribute more purposefully to national and global security initiatives,
- provide more opportunities to enhance prosperity, and
- better achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and further advance human rights.

The UNAA is grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the Government's review of soft power and welcomes any opportunity to meet with DFAT (and other Government entities) to discuss the content of our submission.

Please refer any queries in the first instance to UNAA National Executive Director, Lachlan Hunter at lachlan.hunter@unaa.org.au or 0414 266 932.

Yours sincerely,

Michael G. Smith AO
Major General (Retd)
National President

Encl:
UNAA's Soft Power Submission

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UNAA's SOFT POWER SUBMISSION

The UNAA **applauds and supports** the Australian Government in its commitment to strengthen Australia's soft power to advance Australia's contribution to the rules-based international order, thereby enhancing prospects for national and global security, achieving sustainable development and prosperity, reducing the impact of climate change and improving human rights.

The UNAA **recognises** that soft power and hard power are two sides of the same coin and together constitute 'smart power'. The UNAA **supports** the application of 'smart power' in accordance with the United Nations Charter and **believes** that Australia needs to enhance its current capability to project its soft power component.

The UNAA **considers** that, if judiciously applied, soft power will significantly enhance Australia's international influence and reputation while simultaneously safeguarding and advancing Australia's national interests.

Reaffirming Australia's unwavering commitment to the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which seek a peaceful and prosperous world and which actively limit the use of coercion (hard power) as an exceptional instrument of last resort;

Acknowledging the critical role of the United Nations in the maintenance of the rules-based international order, and in contributing to international peace and security, sustainable development through achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), human rights for all, and establishing and monitoring targets to reduce the impact of climate change; and

Recognising that in an increasingly multipower and contested world order, the continuing security and prosperity of our island continent will require UN support and increased diplomatic and other practical non-coercive efforts; and

Understanding that Australia's global reputation and ability to exert soft power is impacted adversely by its recent record on the key issues of the environment and climate action, refugees and asylum seekers, and the rights of First Australians;

The UNAA **calls upon** the Australian Government to seriously consider implementing the following practical and cost-effective soft power initiatives:

Whole-of-Government Initiatives

- To quickly redress Australia's current **diplomatic deficit** (that has been recognised in research for the past decade) the Australian Government should:



- substantially increase DFAT funding and personnel levels to better enable the Department to lead, initiate and sustain critical and practical soft power initiatives, particularly across the critical areas of conflict prevention and peacebuilding;
- implement a whole-of-government approach by requiring and resourcing relevant departments and agencies to provide personnel and expertise who understand and are trained to contribute to Australia's soft power initiatives; and
- recognise that military and police contributions as exercised through UN peace operations and special political missions are the most visible face of the United Nations and critical components of soft power, and that Australian military, civilian and police personnel must be properly trained to undertake these complex tasks. This initiative will require:
 - the Department of Defence and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to increase its contribution to UN policy development, peace operations and conflict prevention and be able to sustain an annual minimum commitment of around 250 personnel (currently approximately 40). To do so the ADF will need to modernise and expand the Peace Operations Training Centre which is currently inadequately resourced to perform as an international peak training centre;
 - the Australian Federal Police, once world-leading in UN police operations, to regain its former status and sustain a minimum of 40 police to the United Nations annually (currently no AFP personnel are provided to the United Nations);
 - the Australian Civilian Corps (ACC), currently managed by RedR, to provide training and trained personnel to enable and promote Australia's civilian contribution to UN peace operations, special political missions and UN field agencies; and
 - the mainstreaming of Australian civil-military-police training for UN peace operations, special political missions and UN field agencies to include the full development of doctrine for protection of civilians (POC), the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), security sector reform (SSR), gender awareness and equality, and international humanitarian law (IHL); and
 - the Australian Government to enhance partnerships and training with UN-contributing countries throughout the Indo-Pacific.
- To ensure a **more coordinated whole-of-government approach to conflict and disaster management overseas** - essential components of soft power - the Government should relocate the Australian Civil-Military Centre (with assured continuation funding) from the Department of Defence to the Department of the



Prime Minister & Cabinet and mandate the Centre with proper policy development and coordination roles. To place the Centre in any one department relegates the Centre making it very difficult to ensure a coordinated whole-of-government commitment and approach.

- To ensure Australia has **meaningful and sustained soft power influence**, the Government should quickly enhance Australia's personnel contributions to the United Nations and other multilateral organisations and fora. To this end, the Government should:
 - actively seek senior appointments within the United Nations and other relevant multilateral organisations and fora, with special emphasis on empowering women to senior leadership roles;
 - appoint specialist envoys/ambassadors to a range of critical soft power initiatives (such as POC and SSR), similar to Australia's approach to counter-terrorism;
 - initiate a UN career-development program stream to facilitate the entry of younger professionals into the UN system (similar to that used by some Scandinavian countries); and
 - continue to fund the establishment of an Australian UN Alumni comprised of current and former UN personnel, thereby contributing to the enhancement of soft power knowledge and the maintenance of expertise.

Whole-of-Nation Initiatives

- **Develop Australia's capacity for Track 2 diplomacy and confirm priorities.** Unlike the UK - which has consistently been rated first in the annual Soft Power 30 Index (Australia has slipped from 6th in 2015 to 10th in 2018) - Australia uses an ad hoc and unplanned approach to track 2 diplomacy. Yet, Australia has considerable expertise in the tertiary, business and NGO sectors that can contribute enormously in promoting Australia's soft power. Considerable potential exists to strengthen people-to-people linkages through civil society organisations such as the UNAA, and to build on existing relations between professional associations. This will require DFAT (and other Government departments when appropriate) to be resourced and enabled to proactively engage more transparently with non-government entities in a timely manner. Switzerland provides a credible example of the effectiveness of soft power exercised through non-government organisations working in collaboration with government. The UNAA is particularly keen to work with the Australian Government on Track 2 soft power initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region. Similar initiatives with other organisations can be identified in sectors such as communications, tourism, science and technology, and education.
- **Establish a UN Centre of Excellence.** Given the central and critical role of the United Nations in the maintenance of the rules-based international order, the UNAA believes that an obvious and immediate soft power initiative would be for the



Australian Government to facilitate the establishment of a tertiary-level UN Centre of Excellence. Such a Centre would provide a visible demonstration of Australia's commitment to the United Nations which is, fundamentally, a soft power organisation. The Centre would be best established at the Australian National University, with hubs at other Australian universities, and in affiliation with the UN University in Tokyo, Japan. The Centre would draw on expertise across the key UN pillars of peace and security, international law and justice, sustainable development, climate change, humanitarian action and human rights. Such a Centre could also help promote and monitor Australia's progress against the SDGs. Moreover, through relevant soft power research and courses such a Centre would help ensure the development of multilateral and soft power expertise for future generations.

- **Develop soft power training and professional development.** Regardless of whether a UN Centre of Excellence is established, Australia quickly needs to develop training and professional development programs in areas relevant to the advancement of soft power. For example, from a UN perspective and relevant to the peace and security pillar, there are critically important areas of expertise - such as mediation, SSR, UN logistics, POC and human rights - which are required by UN personnel. Currently, Australians are required to travel overseas to acquire such qualifications. Such accredited courses (among others) should be conducted in Australia with a view to attracting regional participation. Gaining qualifications in such specialist areas better prepares Australians with the skills required to implement soft power. Such soft power courses could be included in the Diplomatic Academy syllabus and outsourced to service providers, such as the UNAA.

