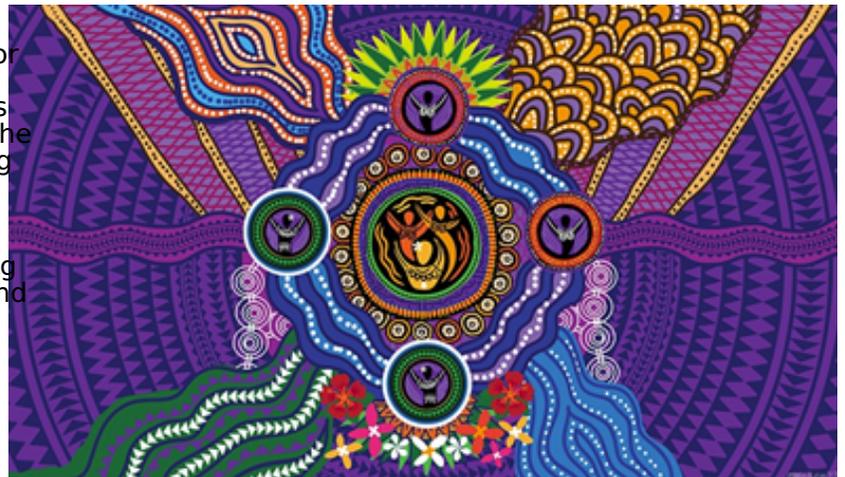


Wiyi Yani U Thangani—(Women’s Voices)—Securing Our Rights, Securing Our Future Report 2020

January 28, 2021

A landmark report on Australia’s First Nations women and girls has been released by June Oscar AO, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. [Wiyi Yani U Thangani—\(Women’s Voices\)—Securing Our Rights, Securing Our Future Report 2020](#) calls for the urgent establishment of a National Action Plan, an advisory body, targets and benchmarks for women and girls to lead in all areas of life. The report focuses on the themes: Supporting strong families; Living and belonging; Healthy and engaged lives; Thriving communities and sustainable economies. The report sets out a comprehensive plan including seven overarching recommendations to address systemic issues and reshape government engagement with First Nations women and girls.



The report builds on the legacy of the 1986 Women’s Business Report, which was the first time in Australian history that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were consulted nationally. This time more than 2,000 First Nations women and girls from hundreds of different ancestral countries shared their stories identifying their strengths, needs and aspirations for the future. The ‘Community Guide’ contains a statistical snapshot. More than half of the Indigenous population are women and girls. NSW has the largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. While educational attainment has increased, Aboriginal women and girls report higher rates of depression and anxiety, life expectancy is nearly 8 years shorter than the rest of the female population and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls are 21 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Indigenous women.

A central aim of Wiyi Yani U Thangani was to look beyond the cycles of crisis that have come to characterise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lives, and to define women and girls “in their own image, determined by them”. The principles underpinning the report methodology are that First Nations women and girls have the right to self-determination, participation in decision making, respect for and protection of culture and equality and non-discrimination. Wiyi Yani U Thangani has taken an intersectional approach that recognises Indigenous women and girls experience their human rights, including violations of their rights, in ways that are very different to Indigenous men and boys.

Commissioner Oscar said at the Australian Human Rights Commission launch of the report: “What we have here today, is not a report for the shelves; it’s a call to action. It’s a strengths-based message for all Australians to see, to hear, to learn of the remarkable resilience and capabilities of our women and girls, who have the solutions but lack a seat at the table.” Some major conclusions of the report identify that it is structural forces, not individual behaviours alone, which overwhelmingly determine life outcomes and investing in First Nations women and girls is an investment in society. First Nations women and girls want

systems and services to be preventative, place-based, culturally safe, healing-oriented and trauma informed. The report states that the success of the recommendations depends on governments entering into genuine partnerships which include effective mechanisms to hold governments to account and upholds the right for First Nations women and girls to speak in a representative capacity.

- Leeanda Smith and Russell Honnery