

## **The Roadmap to Realizing Rights: Every Woman Every Child's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health"**

*Remarks by Natasha Stott Despoja, Global Ambassador for Women and Girls, 15 March 2016*

*What are Australia's policies, programmes and strategies to support ending violence against women and girls and women's empowerment?*

Both within Australia and in our international development and diplomatic work, Australia is taking strong action to empower women and end violence against women and girls.

We know the key to ending violence lies in primary prevention - identifying and addressing the underlying drivers of violence.

We also know that while many factors underpin the appallingly high rates of violence perpetrated against women in all our countries, this violence is more likely to occur where gender inequality is ingrained in social and cultural norms, structures and practices.

So Australia is supporting programs domestically and internationally that empower women, promote equality and that address violence, from prevention, to early intervention to response.

In our international aid program, our target is that 80 per cent of our investments must effectively address gender equality concerns in their implementation.

This work focuses on the Indo-Pacific region – a region where rates of violence are high, where health needs are high and gender inequality remains significant and pervasive.

We fund major programs that empower women and address violence in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste.

In the Pacific, our flagship program is the 10 year, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Initiative.

Under this program, we are working in partnership with Pacific governments and civil society organisations to promote women's participation in leadership and economic life and an end to violence against women.

## 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

We are also proud of our partnership with the United Nations on this important work through, for example, the:

- Joint United Nations Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence,
- the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women,
- Partners for a prevention and
- Family Health and Safety Studies in the Pacific.

*In particular how are these efforts linked to the Australia government's implementation of the commitment to the Global Strategy made last September?*

Global cooperation, leadership and momentum to end violence against women and girls, to improve outcomes for their health and to empower them is critical.

Australia welcomed the launch of the *Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health* last year.

The *Every Woman, Every Child* initiative and its first strategy 'Saving Lives, Protecting Futures', have played a pivotal role in achieving great progress globally over the last five years to improving women's and children's health.

The new Strategy is an important mechanism for galvanising international efforts to achieve core Sustainable Development Goals.