



Women's Human Rights Campaign

## **Women's Human Right Campaign makes submission to Australia's Third Universal Periodic Review**

June 2020

Over 20 not for profit women's groups have made a submission to the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights for consideration at Australia's upcoming Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

*"The report calls on the Australian Government to recognise women as adult human females and to prioritise their safety and their right to meet and engage in activities free of male bodied individuals"* according to Virginia Mansel Lees, spokesperson for the Coalition of Activist Lesbians (COAL), which was established in 1994 and is accredited by the United Nation's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with special consultative status.

The report also demands reproductive autonomy and maternal rights, including greater protection of the crucial bond between a mother and child. Anna Kerr, Principal Solicitor of Feminist Legal Clinic Inc. and a lead author of the report says:

*"The high rate of child removal facilitated by both community services and the Family Court, and the increasing commodification of motherhood by use of international surrogacy arrangements, constitute a significant infringement of the human rights of not only mothers, but children, and renders them vulnerable to ongoing male violence and sexual abuse."*

Other recommendations in the report include making free childcare permanent, providing appropriate levels of compensation for domestic and sexual violence, and adopting the Nordic Model whereby prostituted women are freed from the threat of prosecution, while the purchase of sex is criminalised along with all forms of third-party profiteering.

*"We also need to overhaul our education system so it no longer indoctrinates students with notions of male superiority and the supremacy of violence."* says Mansel Lees, *"but perhaps most urgently the government must inquire into the exponential increase in young girls presenting with gender dysphoria and receiving damaging hormonal and surgical interventions in their efforts to change sex."*

The international Women's Human Rights Campaign (WHRC) consists of volunteer women from across the globe dedicated to protecting women's sex-based rights. Its volunteers include academics, writers, organisers, activists, lawyers, health practitioners and others who are concerned with the erosion of women's sex-based rights.

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