

Mr Tony Zappia MP
Chair, Human Rights Subcommittee, JSCFADT
Parliament House
Canberra
ACT 2600
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Zappia

Re: New inquiry into gender inequality as a national security and economic security imperative

Civil Liberties Australia thanks you for the invitation to make a submission to this important inquiry.

Key themes

In CLA's view, the overall approach is sound. While it would be worthwhile for the Committee to be aware of the experiences of specific stakeholders, investigation of the general points is not necessary. There is quite a lot of global literature and evidence on the first three points. October 2025 marked 25 years since the key UN resolution was adopted so there are likely some recent reviews available.

The value add would be to focus more on the experience of Australia.

Under point 4, particularly constructive would be investigation into "The role of locally-led leadership and decision making in advancing gender equality and the Women Peace and Security Agenda". CLA points out the importance and value of including women in national security organisations.

On the economic side, the Committee should analyse Australia's progress towards equal pay since the passage of the relevant legislation, and progress in addressing persistent constraints, like occupational segregation.

Re the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the Committee should also examine Australia's experience over the 25 years since the adoption of UNSC 1325 - what has changed, in which areas have there been key gains and major constraints? How useful have been Australia's two national action plans on WPS? They already highlighted looking at the role of the women's movement and key stakeholders.

The Committee needs to distinguish between Australia's own policies and programs in defence and security, and what Australia has supported in other countries as part of development and other programs and advocacy. Australia's role in advocacy in the Pacific and Pacific Rim requires close evaluation.

CLA welcomes this inquiry and looks forward to reading the Committee's report. We trust you will draw on the lessons for the past, assess and predict the changing climate of "security" issues, and propose a sensible approach by Australia in the future, taking into account the views of the INSLM.

CLA notes specifically that to advance gender equality for women, Australia needs to adopt a foundational document that establishes what equality means for females and males - a legislated Human Rights Act for the entire nation.

Yours sincerely

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