



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee
Human Rights Sub-Committee

MEDIA RELEASE
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A focus on empowerment of women in Papua New Guinea

A prominent former Papua New Guinea Member of Parliament, Dame Carol Kidu, will bring her wealth of experience in government, community development and advocacy for the rights of women and girls before a parliamentary committee hearing.

Dame Carol Kidu will appear before a joint public hearing of the Human Rights and Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committees of the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.

The Human Rights Sub-Committee is conducting an inquiry into human rights issues confronting women and girls in the Indian Ocean - Asia-Pacific region. The Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee is inquiring into the role of the private sector in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty in the Indo-Pacific region.

Dame Carol Kidu was PNG's Minister for Community Development for nine years and finished her political career as Leader of the Opposition. She focused on legislative and policy reform for social development in PNG with a human rights based approach to development and a focus on vulnerable populations. In addition to her Ministerial work, she established the Parliamentary Committee on HIV in 2003 and the PNG Parliamentary Group on Population and Development in 2008. Since retiring from politics, she has been sought after as an international and regional advocate on issues of equity and social inclusion.

Australia has had a long history of engagement with PNG. Today, Australian governments and business continue this engagement; however, local industries and communities in PNG face significant development challenges.

The aid program to PNG is Australia's second largest bilateral aid investment -- \$577.1 million in 2014-15. Australia's development assistance aims to support improvements in health, education, law and justice, transport, infrastructure, gender equality and governance.

The Sub-Committees look forward to hearing Dame Carol's views on the effectiveness of Australia's aid programs, the role of the private sector in economic and social progress, and measures that can enhance the human rights of women and girls.

Public hearing: 1:00pm Tuesday 3 February 2015
Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra.

Further information on the inquiry is available on the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jfadt The proceedings will be audio webcast live on: <http://www.aph.gov.au/News and Events/Watch Parliament>

For media inquiries: contact the Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee, the Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP on (03) 5821 5371 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 4477 (Parliament House) or the Chair of the Human Rights Sub-Committee, the Hon Philip Ruddock MP Via Mr Ross Macdonald on 0417 852 209. For all other inquires, contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 2313.