



NATSILS

National Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Legal Services

TRUE JUSTICE FOR OUR PEOPLE

MEDIA RELEASE

PM ignores human rights obligations

7 July 2026

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) is alarmed at Australia's lack of concern towards its human rights obligations and unchecked racial discrimination.

Last week the Federal Government responded to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR), where the international community evaluates human rights records and provides recommendations for how to improve.

Of the 322 recommendations to improve its human rights standing, the Federal Government only accepted 128 recommendations.

Nerita Waight, Chair of NATSILS says the decision to accept a meagre 39 per cent of the international community's recommendations shows a lack of leadership and commitment to addressing issues that deeply impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including the rights and wellbeing of our children.

"Ignoring recommendations does not change the evidence. Our children are being locked up at staggering rates, and things are getting worse.

"In the face of the international community's criticism, Australia chooses to ignore its human rights obligations.

"In the past 6 months, Australia has been called out by three United Nations Committees and Working Groups for reports and evidence of systemic racism and human rights violations.

"Australia is being consistently reprimanded on the world stage, but our Prime Minister continues to be missing in action.

"The Prime Minister needs to step up and show leadership. He has the power to act and make laws that are in line with international obligations on children's rights.

"He must take action because state and territory governments are enacting laws that make communities more dangerous and cause profound harm to children and communities.

"It has reached a point where the international community is deeply concerned about the impacts these laws have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, which will further entrench them into cycles of disadvantage and inequality.

“The Prime Minister not only has the legal authority to act – he has the moral responsibility to. The time to act is now,” says Ms Waight.

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