



Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee  
Department of the Senate  
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**Submission in Response to the Senate Inquiry into the Issues Facing Diaspora Communities in Australia.**

Dear Senate Committee Members,

On behalf of the South Sudanese Australian National Consensus Council (SSNCC), I wish to make a submission concerning the Senate Inquiry into the issues facing diaspora communities in Australia. As the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee has been tasked with examining the issues facing the diaspora communities through the following Terms of Reference; strengthening the resilience of the vulnerable groups, removing barriers to full participation, strengthen communication and partnerships between government and communities, our organisation has a strong focus in promoting these key terms. The SSNCC would like to express its full support to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Department of the Senate and draw the Committee's attention to the numerous success stories of the diaspora community, and South Sudanese Australians in particular. Even though a majority of diaspora community members come from conflict backgrounds, they remain resilient and productive members of the wider community. Most of them have found Australia their home and are making a difference through their capacities. The corresponding appreciation from these communities has been to embrace the spirit of diversity through participation in mainstream community social and economic activities.

**Community Consultations Strengthening Australia's Diaspora Communities**

The SSNCC has been advocating for such an engagement because it believes that Australia welcomes cultural and traditional diversity in a bid to continue to build a fairer country for all. Our organisation envisions and supports the approach of strengthening the resilience of Australia's diaspora community because, without it, communities could be subjected to various vulnerabilities resulting to loss of participation in core areas of social life in Australia.

The SSNCC further believes that by removing social and economic barriers which often limit the realisation of individual potentials, increased participation can be achieved. The SSNCC, through its leadership and advocacy, supports the undertaking of strengthening effective networking and communication between diaspora communities towards the building of strong partnerships with government and other non-governmental organisations. Through



government support of diaspora communities, better service delivery to address specific needs can be realised.

In July 2019, when the SSNCC was launched, it conducted its first two-day conference that brought together young people and community members from across Australia. This convergence provided a forum that focused on discussing and exploring ways to better create resilience amongst the South Sudanese community in Australia. The conference identified community consultation on matters that aim to build their capacities as fundamental to their integration. Through collaborative approaches and networking with the mainstream community, South Sudanese can develop socio-culturally diverse programs. These programs and activities designed to celebrate cultural diversity are envisaged to enhance and promote greater consciousness and mutual connections amongst communities.

### **Recommendations**

- The SSNCC recommends that the Committee acknowledges the role of local community organisations in advancing the ideals of the Senate Inquiry by providing sustainable support to activities of organisations that foster mutual understanding amongst communities.
- That the Committee recognises the active participation of the diaspora communities in building a diverse and tolerant Australia.
- That the Committee provides a platform for diaspora communities to regularly meet with the federal government, its departments and institutions so that emerging issues are discussed, and solutions provided yearly.
- The SSNCC recommends the Committee to encourage the government and the parliament to acknowledge the efforts and resilience of diaspora communities and that they be recognised.

SSNCC encourages the Senate Committee to upon review of the above-mentioned recommendations establish a dedicated diaspora community focused advisory group to:

- Ensure vibrant promotion of diversity to closing the gap of existing vulnerabilities and emerging issues;
- Consider and empower diaspora communities with tools for capacity building through skills trainings;
- Develop an in-depth analysis and monitoring of stories of success of diaspora communities;
- Establish a system of monitoring and evaluating social transformation through socioeconomic trends corresponding individual and community developments;
- Fund and monitor sustainability projects particularly in areas of empowering women and girls from diaspora communities;
- Engage and link all diaspora communities with key policy stakeholders to advance robust academic-oriented research projects; and
- Provide consistent leadership training programs to enable diaspora communities better manage and realise best practices for initiating, implementing and achieving results-driven projects.



## About the Organisation

The South Sudanese Australian National Consensus Council (SSNCC) is an independent federal advocacy organization working to build a common understanding on issues affecting South Sudanese Australians. It has no political or religious affiliations. Much of SSNCC's focus is to bring to the forefront discussions about diversity and articulate clear comprehension on issues related to integration and those impacting on their lives while settling. The organization encourages open and ongoing discourses on settlement issues that may influence flexible engagement between South Sudanese communities and the mainstream community. This approach is conducted through public consultations on significant issues affecting community wellbeing such as career and employment, education and training, and access to services available. The SSNCC, therefore, aims to foster social affinity between the South Sudanese as a diverse community and government institutions. These efforts aim to promote cultural and social cohesion. Our members together with organisational members, aim to provide a national platform where issues affecting the South Sudanese are professionally discussed and develop well-informed approaches to emerging issues by promoting local voices and stories. Thus, the SSNCC provides an avenue where access to quality and credible information shapes the intended outcome to issues being identified and discussed through mutual encouragement and engagement.

The SSNCC wishes to register its gratitude to the Senate Committee for the opportunity to contribute to the Senate Inquiry on issues facing diaspora communities. The organisation reiterates once again that it supports the Senate Inquiry and maintains a strong interest in the Terms of References. The organisation acknowledges this effort from the Department of the Senate as it represents an expression of commitment to the lives of diaspora diverse communities. We look forward to hearing the outcome of this input.

Yours Sincerely,

Goy Leek  
Secretary-General, South Sudan National Consensus Council

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