

FAIR AGENDA

For immediate release | Fair Agenda

The Women's Safety Summit concluded yesterday. What might have been an opportunity to listen to and engage the hundreds of experts in attendance, was instead narrow and exclusionary.

15+ organisations and survivors have already signed on to a joint response statement (as below), which is live and will be updated with new supporters, spokespeople and quotes ongoing at: <https://www.safetysummit.org.au/response>

Joint statement: Safety Advocates Respond to Women's Safety Summit

We are in a moment of national reckoning, in which survivors have spoken out and shone a spotlight on gender-based violence. **This moment demands national leadership.**

The Government's Women's Safety Summit did not meet this moment.

Whilst many experts shared powerful advice, wisdom and recommendations; the opportunity for contribution by the hundreds invited as delegates was limited. The agenda was narrow, the process was exclusionary, lacked transparency, and the space was tightly controlled. The Summit failed to meaningfully include many marginalised groups; and a number of key advocates, including survivors, were not invited to contribute.

The next National Plan can only succeed if it works for everyone affected by gender-based violence. It needs to be relevant to all of our community; expert-led; to draw from the expertise that flows from lived experience, and to be focused on systemic, transformative change. These co-design principles were not adequately reflected at the Summit. They must be central to the National Plan if it is to enable a safer future.

First and foremost, governments must address the ongoing impacts of colonisation and invest in the leadership and expertise of First Nations people. Governments must value and embed the expertise of lived experience. Experts and advocates have already laid out a full spectrum of solutions; from addressing fundamental inequalities, barriers and biases to specific services, support systems and policies. Many panellists spoke powerfully to some of these issues throughout the Summit. We echo their voices here, including the call for action.

Hundreds of organisations and thousands of individuals also brought a call for 12 transformative actions to form the foundation of the next National Plan. **Experts have laid out a blueprint. Now we need action from all governments to realise it.**

Governments hold the power to shape systems, policies and structures that contribute to gender inequality and other structural inequalities that are drivers of violence. They control policies that directly impact our safety on a daily basis. The Federal Government needs to play a leadership role. We urge the Federal Government to commit to systemic change, including setting concrete targets. Achieving transformative change goes beyond funding, but will not be possible without a long-term and substantial increase in Commonwealth funding across the full spectrum, from primary prevention to response and recovery. This must include funding services that directly impact our safety on a daily basis, including for initiatives informed by evidence; specialist practice expertise; and lived experience. We demand governments act now to implement and resource systemic and structural change.

Endorsed by:

Lula Dembele, survivor-advocate
Nicole Lee, survivor-activist
Talie Star, survivor advocate with lived expertise
Rachael Natoli, Lokahi Foundation
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Australian Women Against Violence Alliance
Australian Women's Health Network
Australian Women's Health Network
Australian Council of Social Services
Australian Council of Trade Unions
Northern Territory Council of Social Service
Women's Legal Service Queensland
Women's Legal Service NSW
Gender Equity Victoria
Ending Violence Against Women Queensland
Muslim Women Australia
WIRE (Women's information Referral Exchange)

Additional endorsers are being accepted, and the list live at www.safetysummit.org.au/response

Comment available from

Quotes from more than 15 spokespeople are available on the website <https://www.safetysummit.org.au/response> including from:

- Lula Dembele, survivor-advocate,
- Janine Rees, survivor-advocate, #HowDareSheSpeak
- Nicole Lee, survivor-activist,
- Wynetta Dewis, Co-Chair National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services Forum (contact Hineani Roberts mcadvisor@djirra.org.au)

- Renee Carr, Executive Director Fair Agenda
- Delia Donovan, CEO of Domestic Violence NSW (contact Caitlin Morahan, Communications Manager)
- Rachael Natoli, Lokahi Foundation
- Cassandra Goldie, CEO, Australian Council of Social Service
- Michele O'Neil, ACTU President (contact Isabella Tilley, Media Officer_)
- Yumi Lee, Older Women's Network NSW
- Kate Sieper, NTCOSS
- Professor Helen Keleher, AWHN Deputy Chair
- Holly Brennan, AWHN Board Member
- Emma Iwinska, President of Ending Violence Against Women Queensland, AWHN Board member, CEO at Women's Health Queensland
ceo@womenshealth.org.au
- Tanja Kovac, CEO of Gender Equity Victoria
- Maya Krayem Abdo OAM, CEO Muslim Women Australia
- Julie Kun, CEO of Wire

To see the full statement, live list of endorsements and range of quotes from supporting organisations and individuals, visit <https://www.safetysummit.org.au/response>