

# Australia



Australia is a Member State of the United Nations (UN), and has international human rights obligations. Australia is not a participant in any regional human rights system.

## United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Australia is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, Australia's policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of five treaty bodies.

Australia has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Australia has submitted a reservation, declaration or understanding that modifies its obligations under the following treaties: [CERD](#), [ICCPR](#), [CEDAW](#), [CRC](#), and [CRPD](#).

Australia has also ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty, and optional protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Australia has a duty to submit **State reports** to each UN treaty body associated with the relevant treaty Australia has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis, and describe the steps Australia has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

Australia has also ratified [optional protocols](#) and made appropriate declarations that allow individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of the ICCPR, CEDAW, CAT, CRPD, and CERD. Specific UN treaties include [inquiry procedures](#), which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations. Australia has accepted the inquiry procedures of the CAT, CEDAW, and CRPD.



On August 7, 2008, Australia extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means that any special rapporteurs or working groups are welcome to conduct visits in Australia. For example, the Special Rapporteur on health went on a mission to Australia in 2009, and published a [report](#) in 2010.

For more information on Australia's engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/AUIndex.aspx>.

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