

# AIATSIS Seminar Series

**Monday 4 August 2008**

**Presenter: Tom Calma**

**Canberra 12:30pm–2:00pm, Mabo Room, AIATSIS Building, Acton Peninsula**

**Darwin 12.00pm – 1.30pm**

## **Building a sustainable National Indigenous Representative Body**

On 12 July 2008, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission released an issues paper on options for establishing a new National Indigenous Representative Body.

The issues paper addresses the following three questions:

- First, what lessons can be learned from mechanisms for representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the national, State/ Territory or regional level that have previously existed or that are currently in place?
- Second, what lessons can be learned from mechanisms for representing Indigenous peoples that have been established in other countries?
- And third, what options are there for ensuring that a National Indigenous Representative Body is sustainable?

In this seminar, Commissioner Calma will provide an overview of the key issues raised by the Commission in the paper. He will discuss how a new representative body might operate so as to inspire and support our people, while also holding governments accountable for their efforts, so we may ultimately enjoy equal life chances to all other Australians.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the key challenges to be faced in establishing a new body to ensure that it has legitimacy among Indigenous peoples and can become sustainable in its operations.

Mr Calma is an Aboriginal elder from the Kungarakan tribal group and a member of the Iwaidja tribal group whose traditional lands are south west of Darwin and on the Coburg Peninsula in the Northern Territory, respectively. He is the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's ATSI Social Justice Commissioner and Racial Discrimination Commissioner. He has been involved in Indigenous affairs at a local, community, state, national and international level and worked in the public sector for over 35 years.

### **For further information contact**

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