



AFFPC AUSTRALIAN
FEMINIST FOREIGN
POLICY COALITION

Advancing Feminist Foreign Policy in Australia

AUSTRALIAN FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY COALITION

Welcome to the August newsletter of the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition!

Thank you for being involved in this growing community advancing feminist foreign policy in Australia.

In this bi-monthly newsletter, we share updates from the Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition (AFFPC) and the global Feminist Foreign Policy (FFP) space.

Please direct all enquiries, suggestions and feedback to Liz Gill-Atkinson at research@iwda.org.au.

FOCUS:

Women Deliver 2023

After a months-long journey to bring the voices of feminist movements to the global stage, IWDA and other AFFPC members joined 6000 feminists in Kigali, Rwanda at the Women Deliver conference – one of the largest gender equality conferences in the world!

Our journey started in Fiji at the Women Deliver Pacific Convening (supported by IWDA as an [Oceanic Pacific Regional Committee](#) member) which produced an [Outcomes Statement](#) highlighting priority areas for Pacific feminists.

These outcomes were taken to June's [Oceanic Pacific Regional Convening](#) in Melbourne. The conference included an FFP focus, with Alice Ridge (IWDA) chairing a panel on feminist policy-making, with AFFPC Core Group member Julie Ballangarry (Griffith University), Mereseini Rakuita (Pacific Women, Pacific Community-SPC), 'Ofa-ki Levuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki (Women and Children Crisis Centre) and Dr Fiona Hukula (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat). All panellists highlighted First Nations-led and decolonial approaches as key to feminist domestic and foreign policy.

At Women Deliver in Kigali, Equality Insights (IWDA) launched the [Data for Gender Equality Zine](#) and Bettina Baldeschi (IWDA CEO) joined a plenary making the case for funding feminist movements where she highlighted that anti-LGBTIQ+ organisations in the USA *alone* received an average of \$620 million per year for the past decade – about the same as women's rights organisations *globally* receive through ODA in a year.

These funding discussions continued in a session chaired by friend-of-the-AFFPC Lyric Thompson ([FFP Collaborative](#)), bringing together examples of feminist policies at international, national and sub-national levels. France's Ambassador Delphine O shared how [France's feminist foreign policy](#) has enabled funding to feminist organisations and movements. Liberia's Minister of Gender, Children & Social Protection Williametta Piso Saydee-Tarr spoke about their commitment to feminist approaches across foreign and domestic policy, [enabled by](#) a proud tradition of feminist activism and the President's commitment to being "feminist-in-chief".

From Australia, Natalie Hutchins, Victoria's Minister for Gender Equality, highlighted the Federal government's [commitment to First Nations Foreign Policy as key to a feminist approach](#).

Women Deliver 2023 was not without controversy, with [feminist movements](#) and [government allies](#) condemning the platforming of anti-rights, anti-LGBTIQ+ and anti-abortion President of Hungary Katalin Novak. [Women Deliver President and CEO Dr Maliha Kahn](#) and welcomed the concerns, highlighting that her attendance was organised by the host Government of Rwanda and noting that while they had some differences, Rwanda had been the first host government to guarantee visas to all attendees, enabling participation from 170 countries.

AFFPC UPDATES:

What we are up to

From Economic Growth to a Wellbeing Economy: Notes for a Feminist Foreign Policy

In this paper, Naila Kabeer from the London School of Economics and Sarah Cook from the University of New South Wales explore how progress towards a feminist wellbeing economy might be measured. The authors outline the patriarchal history of the concept of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and argue that it is a flawed measure. While tracking the ways that GDP is used as a measure of growth, the authors bring a feminist perspective to this discussion and echo the calls to find ‘beyond-GDP’ measures of progress that are more feminist, inclusive, and sustainable.

[Download Paper](#)

July AFFPC Issues Paper

Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan: Foreign Policy Responses

Feminist Foreign Policy approaches can protect and defend the fundamental rights of women and girls and help them reclaim their rights to education, employment, and political agency. The authors of this paper, Dr. Farkhondeh Akbari and Professor Jacqui True of Monash University, explore the restricted rights of women and girls in Afghanistan almost two years after the Taliban takeover. They make the case that governments who employ a feminist foreign policy approach or prioritize gender equality must use the term “gender apartheid” to strongly indicate their condemnation.

[Download Paper](#)

Issues Papers are published bi-monthly on the [AFFPC website](#).

AFFPC / DFAT Consultation on International Gender Strategy: On Monday 17 July, AFFPC members participated in a consultation with DFAT on the development of a new International Gender Strategy. Members highlighted considerations for Australia in adopting an explicitly feminist strategy, to ensure that it carries the full transformative potential of a feminist approach. This included discussion of the need to address interconnected systems of power, including coloniality and First Nations justice in line with the First Nations foreign policy, as well as practical suggestions for managing the politics of the word “feminist” in the region. Discussion also covered a range of thematic priorities and institutional mechanism to ensure accountability. In addition to members of the AFFPC Core Group, 10 representatives of the broader membership were selected to join from an open EOI process. We thank all those who expressed interest, and hope to find more opportunities to bring AFFPC members into policy discussions in the future!



Feminist Foreign Policy in Asia Roundtable with Delphine O: On 7 June 2023, the AFFPC, IWDA and Asialink co-hosted a roundtable discussion on feminist foreign policy in Asia with France's Ambassador-at-large for the Generation Equality Forum, Delphine O. With Mongolia set to become the first Asian country to adopt a feminist foreign policy, this discussion explored practical strategies for partnering with the region on feminist priorities, including through implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda; migration; youth empowerment; and opportunities for partnership between France and Australia. The discussion also explored the rich history of feminist movements in the region.

Blog

Why the F Word Matters if we're serious about gender equality in foreign policy



Joanna Pradela and Alice Ridge (IWDA) co-author this piece arguing for DFAT to take an explicitly feminist approach to its new International Gender Strategy. They question why feminism seems to provoke a unique concern for policy makers compared to other approaches which are equally based in our values and worldview, and make the case that a failure to engage with the power relations underlying gender inequality will erode effectiveness and accountability.

[Read More](#)

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD:

Key Feminist Foreign Policy Updates

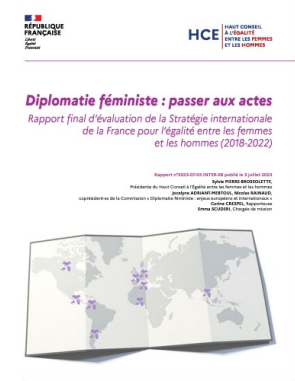
Release of Australia's International Development Policy: The long-awaited International Development Policy was launched on 8 August by Ministers Wong and Conroy, alongside a Performance Framework and Development Finance Review. The policy includes gender equality as a central commitment, but stops short of taking a feminist approach. While



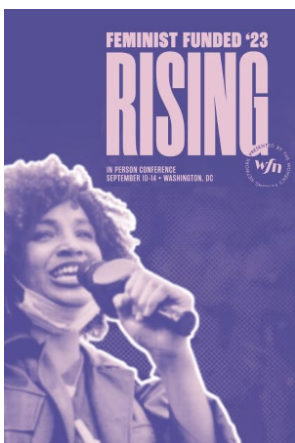
[some news coverage](#) has focused on the (previously announced) commitment that programs over \$3m are now required to have a gender equality objective, along side a new commitment to increase climate objectives in the same way, much of the discussion has centred on the role of Australia’s aid program in [furthering Australia’s competitive advantage in the Pacific](#).



[Dates announced for Shaping Feminist Foreign Policy Conference 2023, hosted by the Government of the Netherlands:](#) On 1 and 2 November 2023, the Netherlands is organising an international conference on feminist foreign policy: the Shaping Feminist Foreign Policy Conference 2023. As a country that’s committed to placing gender equality at the centre of its foreign policy, the Netherlands will arrange this conference with the aim of shaping feminist foreign policy on a national and international level. With many speakers planning to attend from around the world and with differing expertise and experiences, this conference is expected to help grow the network of countries that share the value of pursuing a feminist foreign policy and advancing gender equality.



[France’s Gender Equality High Council 5 year assessment of France’s feminist diplomacy:](#) The Gender Equality High Council of France completed its five-year assessment of France’s “feminist diplomacy.” Although there is no English version of the report present at the moment, a few takeaways were shared by Equipop. The High Council concluded that although progress was made, French “feminist diplomacy” lacked a “solid conceptual basis,” was not strongly supported politically, and did not have a reliable amount of resources, both financial and human. The council recommended three themes that were intended to help France move towards a true feminist foreign policy: define, assume, and finance.



[Registrations open for Feminist Funded RISING 23 in Washington DC in September:](#) The Feminist Funded 2023 conference will, for the first time, include a dedicated [convening on Feminist Foreign Policy](#). Hosted by the Women’s Funding Network (WFN), in partnership with the Equality Fund, Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative, International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA), and the Global Fund for Women, the Feminist Foreign Policy Convening will aim to bring FFP to the domestic philanthropy audience in the US, and deepen connections between our global and local priorities.

WHAT WE'RE READING (AND WATCHING AND LISTENING):

A short list of books, articles, resources, videos and podcasts about feminist foreign policy

Article

Sexual violence is junta's 'modus operandi', Myanmar activist tells UN



Naw Hser Hser, a human rights defender and activist from Myanmar, briefed the UN security council on the crisis taking place in Myanmar that resulted in millions of people being internally displaced and created an environment where people are more vulnerable to sexual violence and gender-based violence. During the briefing, she called to cut the supply of arms, finances, and international support given to the military junta. Her briefing emphasised the importance of providing international support to help the people who have been internally displaced, arrested, harassed, and experienced sexual violence since the 2021 coup.

[Read Article](#)

Investigative Report

Progressive cash for the anti-LGBTQI backlash?



This investigation from the Institute for Journalism and Social Change reveals that governments with pro-gender equality – and even feminist – foreign policies have nonetheless been financially contributing to key players in the anti-LGBTIQ+ movement in Uganda, including organisations who were advocates of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill 2023 which criminalises LGBTIQ+ identities and speech about LGBTIQ+ rights. While there is no evidence these funds went directly to explicitly anti-LGBTIQ+ activities, the extent of support anti-rights organisations is deeply concerning. You can also watch report launch [here](#).

[Read More](#)

Report

Report

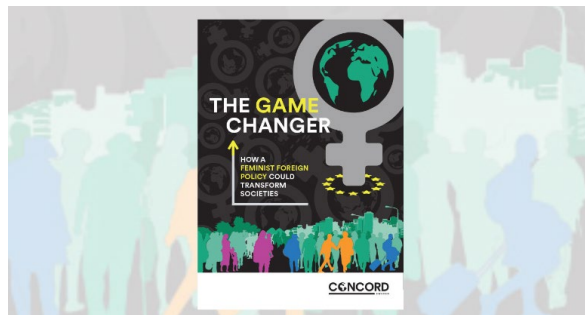
Security For Whom? New report on feminist perspectives on militarism and climate



This report challenges the growing prevalence of militarised responses to the climate crisis. It highlights the need to refocus efforts on the well-being of communities most impacted by climate change, rather than through frameworks which reproduce systems of dominance and oppression, and seeks to redefine what is meant by “security” in line with the experience of feminist movements.

[Read More](#)

The Game Changer: How a feminist foreign policy could transform societies



This report from CONCORD and 16 Swedish civil society organisations explores lessons from 8 years of interaction with Sweden’s feminist foreign policy approach. It outlines the concepts and approaches that are key to a successful and transformative feminist foreign policy, and make practical recommendations for governments adopting and considering this approach.

[Read More](#)

Webinar

Values of First Nations Australians and Pacific connections



This Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy & Defence Dialogue webinar centres on the contributions and cultural understanding that

Blog

France, Australia and the First Nations foreign policy



IWDA’s Senior Research, Policy and Advocacy Advisor, Alice Ridge, and the Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy and

First Nations people provide to foreign policy conversations and international engagements. This discussion was joined by a remarkable group of speakers who shared their First Nations values and the importance of forming a closer relationship between the perspectives of First Nations Australians and Pacific connections and Australia's foreign policy.

[Watch Webinar](#)

Defence Dialogue's (AP4D) program lead, Hugh Piper, published an article exploring the opportunities for Australia and France to collaborate on the shared vision of advancing gender equality and women's rights. The article further highlights France's commitment to feminist foreign policy and the growing efforts to expand its feminist foreign policy in the Indo-Pacific region.

[Read More](#)

The Australian Feminist Foreign Policy Coalition acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and live. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Aboriginal Elders of other communities.

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