



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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High-level Meeting of the General Assembly to Commemorate the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations

**Video statement by the Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister
of Australia**

Greetings from Sydney, Australia.

75 years ago, the world faced a new dawn and it faced the question, would we continue to go down the path of war, conflict, genocide, or would we find a better way, a way that recognised that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights?

The world sought to answer this question with the United Nations.

On this important anniversary, we recall two Australians who played a significant part at the outset.

Of course, there was Doc Evatt, our External Affairs Minister in the 1940s, who believed in what the UN could become.

He negotiated with passion and gusto in San Francisco, moving from room to room, and he went on to be President of the General Assembly.

He fought for fairer representation for the smaller states.

In his words, no sovereign state, however small, would wish to think that its destiny has been handed over to another power, however great.

It was true then, and it's true today.

And there was Jessie Street, the only woman in Australia's delegation and only one of eight women out of 850 delegates that were there in San Francisco.

She worked to ensure that the word "sex" was in the clause "without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion" wherever it occurs in the UN Charter.

Jessie Street was told that women's rights were assumed in the charter. Her response was "We don't believe in taking chances."

Good old Australian realism. Her action helped ensure that the UN stood for the dignity and rights of all.

On this anniversary, I want to pay tribute to every Australian and all indeed who have served as a peacekeeper, delivered aid, tended the sick and contributed to the cause of peace anywhere in the world.

And I particularly also want to acknowledge the members of our Pacific family of nations who have played their part in all of these important services.

We share that faith and we honour their service.

Like the humanity it serves, the UN is of course not perfect.

But its quest is to embody our better angels by listening and engaging, by collaborating and working on the solutions that lift all.

This work goes on. It is as worthy and needed today as we face the challenges of health and climate and economy, a COVID recession, scientific challenges, political challenges of our day.

So many, just as it was 75 years ago when the world emerged from the ruins of a global conflict.

So I honour all who are continuing this great work, as we acknowledge once again this incredibly important anniversary.