

Susan Harris-Rimmer: Raising up: celebrating Australian advocacy for women's rights under international and domestic law

On the 20th anniversary of the SDA, Elizabeth Evatt made a speech in Melbourne called "Falling Short on Women's Rights". She argued that Australian law falls short of its obligations under CEDAW and other international instruments to provide equality rights and non-discrimination in regard to women. Earlier in her CEDAW Committee role she had said: 'Ultimately we have to be judged not by our highest ambitions and achievements, but by our ability to raise from the lowest level those whose needs that are greatest. That is the way I would like Australia, and every other country, to be judged in the United Nations'. I review progress in Australia over the last five years according to Evatt's criteria, and celebrate the role of Australian women such as Evatt and Helen L'Orange in creating multilevel strategies to raise up Australian women and realise their rights.