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TSRA CHAIRMAN TO ATTEND UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) Chairman, Joseph Elu, has been invited to attend the 13th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in New York this week.

The forum is being held from 12-23 May with the theme, 'Principles of good governance consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples'.

Each year, the forum brings Indigenous nations from around the world together to discuss a range of issues, and Mr Elu was invited as part of the Australian Government delegation.

Many crucial themes related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights will be brought before the forum.

With the input of Member States, UN agencies, NGOs and Indigenous Peoples' Organisations, the forum will also tackle the agenda for the 2015 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

Mr Elu, who will be presenting to the forum, said having the opportunity to meet with delegates from various nations and discuss matters pertinent to Indigenous peoples would be a valuable experience.

"Having the opportunity to speak at the forum about issues particular to the Torres Strait will help raise awareness about our unique culture, location and the issues we face on an ongoing basis," Mr Elu said.

"I am also eager to see how other Indigenous groups are working to resolve these issues within their own nation and expect to return with insights on the best ways we can approach the social, health, education and economic problems within the Torres Strait."

The United Nations established the Permanent Forum in 2002 in response to the demands from Indigenous peoples to have a permanent high-level body.

Members of the UNPFII are comprised of 16 independent experts from across the world who serve for a period of three years.

They are an advisory body to the United Nation's Economic and Social Council and provide advice, recommendations and raise awareness on Indigenous issues to the Council.

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