

SPC DG speaks out on need for gender equality in the Pacific

Author : Ashlee Betteridge

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The leader of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community has spoken out on the need to urgently address gender violence in the region and to improve the representation of women in Pacific parliaments.

In an [interview](#) with Radio Australia, Dr Jimmie Rodgers said that he wants prime ministers and presidents across the Pacific to take the lead on working towards gender equality, even calling for measurements and indicators to assess the commitment and performance of Pacific leaders on this issue.

On gender violence, Rodgers said that it was an urgent issue requiring a major shift in attitudes and thinking. He added that it was important to ensure that services and institutions set up to address gender violence were adequately resourced and that offenders were prosecuted.

He said that involving men was also critical in achieving gender equality, particularly in Melanesia.

"We must not only focus on programs for women, that is what we have been doing year in year out. We are preaching to the converted, and more training of women is not actually going to make very much difference in Melanesia. You know, let's face it. We need to actually make disciples of men in Melanesia. They need to be the champions," Rodgers said.