



Human Security Centre

Advisory Board Member

Hon. Dr Ursula Stephens



The Hon Dr Ursula Stephens served a 12-year term in the Australian Senate (ending 30 June 2014) as Senator for New South Wales.

During this time, she led the development of policy and programs to reform the Third Sector in Australia, including the regulatory environment, which led to the establishment of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). From 2007 to 2010, she served as a member of the Executive Council, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, and Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector. She was appointed special advisor to the Treasurer for the Definition of Charities Bill Inquiry in 2012-13.

During her parliamentary career, Dr. Stephens was a member of several key Standing Committees, including the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, and the Joint Committee on Human Rights. She served as Chair of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee; the Senate Economics Committee; and the Regulations and Ordinance Committee; as well as Deputy Chair of the Joint Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee.

Dr. Stephens represented Australia as the permanent delegate to the Inter-Parliamentary Union from 2010 to 2014 and led numerous parliamentary delegations overseas. She is an advisor to the United Nations Development Programme on its project addressing the role of the private sector in the alleviation of poverty, a Director of the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) Australia and a Director of Life Education (NSW). She mentors several social entrepreneurs in Australia, South America and Indonesia.

Dr. Stephens also serves as an ambassador for and patron of a number of Australian philanthropic organisations and charities. Her interests are in promoting social inclusion, community development and indigenous initiatives and adult and community education. She has served on several government and private sector bodies including the Board of

Vocational Education and Training, the NSW Migrant Skills Advisory Council and the NSW Rural Assistance Authority.

Dr. Stephens holds a Diploma in Teaching from the Goulburn CAE, a Bachelor of Education from the University of South Australia and Doctorate in Public Administration from the University of Canberra.