



RESEARCH UNIT FOR THE
STUDY OF SOCIETY, LAW
AND RELIGION (RUSLIR)



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ADELAIDE
AUSTRALIA

Conference Invitation

“Cultural and Religious Freedom under a bill of rights”

Old Parliament House, Canberra: 13–15 August, 2009

Human rights have entered centre stage in Australian public discourse. They have been brought into sharp focus by anticipation of a report to the Federal government by Father Frank Brennan’s committee and recent legislative and executive actions affecting human rights in immigration, indigenous affairs and biker groups. Cases such as *Catch the Fire Ministries*, *Haneef* and *Toben* have also added impetus to the subject.

You are invited to attend a conference that explores the human rights framework in this country and overseas. With the Australian federal government examining the introduction of an Australian bill or charter of rights, the conference, “Cultural and Religious Freedom under a Bill of Rights”, is highly relevant to the current debate.

Panel discussions will include ABC Radio presenter Rachael Kohn (*The Spirit of Things*), eminent jurists Sir Anthony Mason (former Chief Justice of Australia), Emeritus Chief Judge Wallace (US Court of Appeals), Justice Jillani (Pakistan) and Justice Hammond (NZ), and leading Australasian academics Professor Paul Rishworth (Auckland), Professor Rex Ahdar (Otago), Associate Professor Carolyn Evans (Melbourne) and Professor Patrick Parkinson (Sydney).

Other presenters include leading academics and experts from Europe and North America, theologian, legislators, policy makers and leaders from cultural, religious, ethnic and indigenous groups.

Those in favour of a bill of rights assert that human rights freedoms are substantially unprotected. Those opposed to a charter or bill claim Australia already has sufficiently robust laws protecting civil liberties. Recent instances of legislative, executive and judicial action are cited by all sides of the debate to illustrate their point. The question remains: is the existing framework of constitutional, common law and statutory protection sufficient and, if not, how could it be improved?

The question of whether civil, cultural, religious and other rights and freedoms are enhanced or curtailed by a bill of rights can be best answered by dialogue of the kind at this conference. No matter what your role – member of parliament, policy maker, academic, legal practitioner, journalist or community or religious leader – this event should be important to you.

Let your presence be felt in this timely debate.

To register to attend: www.crfbillofrights.org/registration

To learn more about the conference: www.crfbillofrights.org



GROUP OF EIGHT

