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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

ALRC INQUIRY INTO INCARCERATION RATE OF INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Today we announce that the Turnbull Government will ask the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) to examine the factors leading to the over representation of Indigenous Australians in our prison system, and consider what reforms to the law could ameliorate this national tragedy.

It has been 25 years since the final report of the landmark Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, but Indigenous Australians are still overrepresented in Australia's prisons. In 1991, Indigenous Australians made up 14 per cent of our nation's prison population; by 2015, this had increased to 27 per cent.

Other worrying statistics include the fact that Indigenous children and teenagers are 24 times more likely to be incarcerated than their non-Indigenous peers, while Indigenous women are 30 times more likely to be incarcerated.

The ALRC's inquiry is a critical step for breaking through these disturbing trends. The terms of reference will be subject to consultation, particularly with Indigenous Australians, state and territory governments who have primary responsibility for our criminal justice frameworks, as well as the broader legal profession.

The Turnbull Government is committed to reducing Indigenous incarceration and has committed \$256 million in 2016-17 through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy for activities to address the drivers and improve community safety.

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