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Media Release

CULTURAL MINISTERS SUPPORT STRENGTHENING FAIR AND ETHICAL TRADE IN INDIGENOUS ART

An initiative aimed at strengthening fair and ethical trade in the Indigenous visual art sector today received support from Australian and New Zealand cultural ministers.

At the Cultural Ministers Council meeting in Adelaide, ministers endorsed a voluntary Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct for industry and also approved a complementary Charter of Principles for publicly funded collecting institutions.

The aim is to promote good business practice, including transparency in transactions between artists and the marketplace, and to allow public sector collecting institutions to affirm their commitment to ethical collecting principles and promote these best practice standards across the entire Indigenous art collection sector, respectively

The Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct specifies a set of minimum standards for dealers, agents and artists, and defines terms of trade and rights and responsibilities for the sale and management of artworks.

The Charter of Principles affirms standards of transparency and ethical practice for public institutions dealing with Indigenous visual arts and craft, and demonstrates to the Australian community that our public collecting institutions follow the highest ethical standards in collecting Indigenous art.

Today's endorsement by the CMC follows a 2008 decision that a commercial code of conduct was essential for the future of the Indigenous visual arts industry.

Development of the Code was facilitated by the Australia Council, which worked with the industry and jurisdictions and included widespread consultation with stakeholders.

Based on industry feedback that publicly funded collecting institutions should not be seen to be exempt from the ethical standards being applied to commercial galleries, Ministers agreed that a Charter be developed in parallel with the Code. The Charter was developed in consultation with state and territory collecting institutions and the national collecting institutions

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Cultural Ministers Council Secretariat

C/- Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601
Telephone: +61 2 6271 1429 | Fax: +61 2 6271 1500 | Email: contact@cmc.gov.au | Web: www.cmc.gov.au