



MEDIA RELEASE

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United call for Australian Parliament to respect and back full *Uluru Statement from the Heart*

A broad cross section of Australian civil society voices are today calling on the Federal Coalition Government to respect the wishes of Australia's First Nations peoples in the *Uluru Statement* and make constitutional reforms that enable First Nations peoples to take their rightful place in Australia an immediate national priority.

READ JOINT STATEMENT: [A call to the Prime Minister and Australian Parliament](#)

“The marginalisation of our First Nations people and their virtual exclusion from having a say in the policies and practices which affect their lives is a major reason for their current poor outcomes. In spite of this their resilience and strength is extra-ordinary and giving them the power to influence and change is urgent,” said Professor Fiona Stanley, from the Telethon Kids Institute and University of Western Australia.

“National and International studies on colonised Indigenous peoples show clearly that when they are able to implement the solutions developed by them, the outcomes are far better.”

“Our research has shown also that the impact of previous practices of marginalisation and removal are responsible for a large part of today's trauma and First Nations circumstances. Their problems and challenges are similar to other colonised Indigenous populations and we have lots to learn from other countries with treaties and better ways of giving Indigenous people capacity and power to act and take their rightful places in society.”

“Of course there are a multiplicity of First Nations voices, as we have diversity in our opinions. It is therefore imperative that we listen to those different voices to ensure the best outcomes. If we do this and acknowledge this ancient 60,000 year old history in our country, we will all benefit and feel proud to be

Australians.”

Australian Council of Social Service COSS CEO Dr Cassandra Goldie said, “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples made their views crystal clear in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. It is a deeply disrespectful act for our Federal leaders to have unilaterally rejected those views on our behalf.”

“There is broad agreement among the general Australian community for constitutional reform regarding the rightful place of First Nations peoples in our country. We celebrated the *Uluru Statement* and are now stunned that the First Nations leadership has been treated in this way. We call upon this Federal Government and Parliament to put the issue at the top of their agenda.”

“Australia’s First Nations leaders have been understandably disillusioned and frustrated by what has occurred. Although we cannot change our past, we can determine our country’s future. A better future can only start when our Federal Government finally respects the wishes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and allows the wider Australian community to listen to their views and to seize this historic opportunity to deliver on the rights of Australia’s First Nations peoples,” concluded Dr Goldie.

READ JOINT STATEMENT: [A call to the Prime Minister and Australian Parliament](#) which has been signed by over 900 organisations and individuals from across Australia.

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