



Uluru Statement from the Heart Factsheet

The *Uluru Statement from the Heart* represents a historic consensus of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in seeking constitutional change, structural reform and a deeper sense of who we are as a nation.

The journey towards the *Uluru Statement* has been long and challenging. In 1937, Yorta Yorta elder William Cooper petitioned King George VI calling for representation in parliament. The Yirrkala Bark Petitions (1963), the Larrakia Petition (1972) and the Barunga Statement (1988) are just some examples of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's efforts to find a fair place in the Australian nation.

Australia is the only country in the world yet to formally recognise its Indigenous people in the form of a treaty or constitutional recognition, unlike our key allies such as Canada and New Zealand.

The *Uluru Statement* followed extensive deliberations undertaken across Australia through 12 First Nations Regional Dialogues, engaging over 1200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander delegates on their views on real and meaningful recognition in the Constitution. These Regional Dialogues culminated in the four-day First Nations National Constitutional Convention at Uluru in May 2017, from which the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* was created.

The *Uluru Statement* presents fundamental reform through the establishment of a Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution, and a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process for agreement making between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and truth-telling.

These reforms are needed to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a greater say over the decisions that affect them. A constitutionally-enshrined Voice to Parliament would enable Indigenous people to provide advice to the parliament and government on the policies and laws that impact them.

A Makarrata Commission would have two roles: supervising a process of agreement-making and overseeing a process of truth telling. It would supervise processes and agreements between Indigenous Australians and the Government, for example, treaties and other agreements. A Makarrata Commission would also supervise a process of truth telling, allowing the full extent of the past injustices experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be heard and understood. This would allow us to move forward as a spiritually generous nation truly at peace with itself and its history.

The *Uluru Statement from the Heart* is an invitation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to all Australians "to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future".

It's time we accept this invitation.