

The Uluru Statement from the Heart

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future

A Prayer for the Journey of Love

God our Father
We praise you, bless you and thank you.
We have everything because of you.
You are good and we love You.

Jesus our Brother,
you came into this world
to show us the way of love.
You bring good news to those who are poor and oppressed.
You are one with those who suffer.
You are one with the First Peoples of Australia.
Amidst all their pain, you give them hope
that justice, reconciliation and peace will flow
and that they will find their rightful place in our common home.

Creator Spirit,
you have moved through this land since the beginning of time.
You bless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the wisdom
that enables them to care for each other and to care for country.
Fill us all with humility and love
so that we listen with respect to their wisdom and learn from them.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples invite us to journey with
them towards a new day where there is healing and justice for them
and for all Australians.

As we prepare to vote in the referendum on a Voice to Parliament,
may we befriend them and listen to them with deep respect.
Shape us into a community of love
which is a sign of your divine communion of love.
Help us to show all Australians how to build a civilisation of love in this
land now and in the years to come.
In You we place all our trust and hope.

Amen