



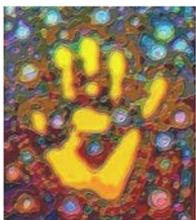
Uluru Statement from the Heart

Sunrise Over Uluru, Uluru
Climb Closure, 2019
Photo by Jimmy Widders Hunt

The Uluru Statement from the Heart

The Uluru Statement from the Heart translation project is a community partnership between the Indigenous Law Centre, UNSW, the North Sydney Council and the Reconciliation Network Northern Sydney Region.

UluruStatement.org



R
N
N
S
R



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.

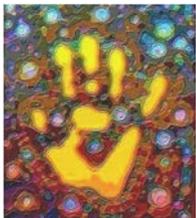
Guiding Principles

of the Uluru Statement from the Heart

The Uluru Statement from the Heart

The Uluru Statement from the Heart translation project is a community partnership between the Indigenous Law Centre, UNSW, the North Sydney Council and the Reconciliation Network Northern Sydney Region.

UluruStatement.org



R
N
N
S
R



The Guiding Principles that informed the Uluru Statement from the Heart are explained on pages 22-28 of the *Final Report of the Referendum Council*. The guiding principles were distilled from the First Nations' Regional Dialogues before the First Nations' National Constitutional Convention, held 23-26 May 2017.

The *Final Report of the Referendum Council* explains that:

'The National Convention did not reopen the work that had been done in the Dialogues. Rather, the task of the National Convention was to bring together the outcomes from the Dialogues in order to arrive at a consensus.'

'These principles have historically underpinned declarations and calls for reform by First Nations. They are reflected, for example, in the Bark Petitions of 1963, the Barunga Statement of 1988, the Eva Valley Statement of 1993, the Kalkaringi Statement of 1998, the report on the Social Justice Package by ATSIC in 1995 and the Kirribilli Statement of 2015.'

'They are supported by international standards pertaining to Indigenous peoples' rights and international human rights law.'

The principles governing the assessment of reform options by the National Constitutional Convention were that reform options should only proceed if it:

1. Does not diminish Aboriginal sovereignty and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty.
2. Involves substantive, structural reform.
3. Advances self-determination and the standards established under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
4. Recognises the status and rights of First Nations.
5. Tells the truth of history.
6. Does not foreclose on future advancement.
7. Does not waste the opportunity of reform.
8. Provides a mechanism for First Nations agreement-making.
9. Has the support of First Nations.
10. Does not interfere with positive legal arrangements.

These are the guiding principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. For further information, please visit the Uluru Dialogue website at ulurustatement.org or email the Indigenous Law Centre, UNSW at ilc@unsw.edu.au.