

Talking about the Uluru Statement From The Heart

Discussion Points:

● What is the Uluru Statement from the Heart?

It is an invitation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to all Australians. They have asked us to walk with them in a movement for a better future. The Uluru Statement seeks to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are acknowledged and listened to at the decision-making tables and in all law-making processes that affect them, their families and communities.

● Voice Treaty Truth

There are three core components to the Uluru Statement From the Heart: Voice, Treaty and Truth.



Voice refers to a First Nations Voice, guaranteed by the Constitution, to provide a permanent platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to be heard by the Parliament of the day.



A **Treaty** is an agreement between First Nations peoples and Australian Governments that aims to set in motion both national acknowledgement of, and legal protection for, First Nations rights and interests.



Undertaking a formalised process of **Truth** telling to acknowledge Australia's history of colonial conflict, dispossession and the strength and resilience of First Nations peoples and cultures.

● Why Constitutional protection?

A constitutional Voice will deliver the authority and certainty required for a durable First Nations Voice on laws and policies that affect them which remains in place regardless of changes in governments. We await a referendum.

Learn more at https://reconciliationnsw.org.au/voice_treaty_truth/



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An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice

In 2023, Australians will have their say in a referendum on whether to update the Constitution to include an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

The Voice will be an independent, representative advisory body for First Nations people. It will provide a permanent means to advise the Australian Parliament and Government on the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on matters that affect them.

The detail:

A set of principles that describe how the Voice will work were agreed to by the [First Nations Referendum Working Group](#).

The Voice is a body that will:

- provide independent advice to Parliament and Government
- be chosen by First Nations people based on the wishes of local communities
- be representative of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- be empowering, community led, inclusive, respectful, culturally informed and gender balanced, and includes youth
- be accountable and transparent
- work alongside existing organisations and traditional structures.

The Voice will not have a program delivery function, or a veto power.

The structure and role of the Voice would be decided by Parliament through legislation, with members to be chosen by First Nations people.

The referendum is part of the Government's commitment to implementing the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#) in full.

Read more about the [Voice to Parliament and referendum](#).

Source: NIAA - National Indigenous Australians Agency <https://voice.niaa.gov.au/#>



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.

Source: <https://fromtheheart.com.au/explore-the-uluru-statement/#statement>

Read more: <https://fromtheheart.com.au/education/> <https://ulurustatement.org/>