

#redfernstatement

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Aboriginal leaders seek new relationship with government through historic Redfern Statement

Australia's leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peaks will today demand a new relationship with government as they deliver the historic Redfern Statement direct to the Prime Minister at Parliament House.

In the lead up to today's 9th Closing the Gap Report to Parliament, the leaders will call on the Prime Minister to support the historic Redfern Statement, a road map to better address the appalling disadvantage gap between Australia's First Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by working with them as genuine partners.

National Congress of Australia's First People's co-chair Mr Rod Little comments: "After 25 years, eight Federal election cycles, seven Prime Ministers, eight Ministers for Indigenous Affairs, 400 recommendations, and countless policies, policy changes, reports, funding promises and funding cuts it's time to draw a line in the sand.

"We need a new relationship that respects and harnesses our expertise, and guarantees us a seat at the table as equal partners when governments are making decisions about our lives."

The Redfern Statement was released during last year's Federal Election campaign on 9 June by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from health, justice, children and families, disability, and family violence prevention sectors.

The statement calls for changes across these sectors through structured engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and is supported by more than 30 major mainstream organisations including the Australian Medical Association and Law Council.

National Congress of Australia's First People's Co-chair Dr Jackie Huggins said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations have worked with our people on the ground for decades and have shown they have solutions.

"Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations deliver 2.5 million episodes of care a year in their local communities – and are the only health and leadership models making inroads on Close the Gap targets.

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“Our teachers, education professionals and family violence experts are delivering real results on the ground in their communities every single day – despite chronic underfunding and an ad hoc policy approach based on three year election cycles.

“Today we are seeking a new relationship, a genuine partnership and a commitment to ongoing structured engagement,” Dr Huggins said.

Read the full Redfern Statement here: <http://nationalcongress.com.au/about-us/redfern-statement/>

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ABOUT THE REDFERN STATEMENT

The historic Redfern Statement calls for changes that address housing, health, education, justice, disability and representation for Aboriginal people, including:

- Restoration of funding cut from the Indigenous Affairs Budget;
- Urgent reforms to the controversial Indigenous Advancement Strategy;
- Renewed commitment to closing the gap within a generation, with the inclusion of justice targets aimed at reducing incarceration and family violence;
- A new Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, managed and run by senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public servants;
- Restoration of funding for the National Congress of First People’s – as a representative voice for Aboriginal people;
- Restoration of funding to national peak bodies to co-design policy and drive implementation – allowing this new partnership to function effectively;
- Implementation of recommendations by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation – including an agreement-making framework (treaty) and constitutional reform.

The Redfern Statement has been developed by national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak and representative bodies including: National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples, First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN), National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS), National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (NACCHO), National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services (FVPLS), SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, The Healing Foundation, and The National Health Leadership Forum (NHLF). The Statement also has the overarching support of The Change the Record Coalition; Close the Gap Steering Committee, and Family Matters