

The Uluru Statement from the Heart

The Wellspring Community of Australia 2023

From our members whose ancestors have been in this land for countless years and those who have come more recently

The Voice to Parliament, Treaty and treaties, and a National Truth-Telling Commission, are the three central calls of the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart and are a heartfelt plea from Aboriginal and Torres Strait people to the nation of Australia, from the depths of their powerlessness. The Uluru Statement from the Heart offers later comers a moral and ethical way to face our racist history of oppression and dispossession and move forward together. Justice for creation and First Nations people requires a re-alignment of the dominant western culture. The referendum on the Voice is a watershed moment, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to begin healing for our nation and our land.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart reminds us all that the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent have a "sovereignty based on the ancestral tie between the land, or mother nature ... which has never been ceded and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown." The Voice is not only of First Nations people but a voice through them of the Australian land. Hopefully, if later comers start listening to this Voice we will hear the Spirit of the land and come to be more attuned to the soul of Australia. The referendum on the Voice provides our nation with the chance for all of us to come home to our own land, to listen to our First Nation Peoples, and hopefully to find a deep, visceral, spiritual connection to country.

The Statement from the Heart is the culmination of decades, if not centuries, of Aboriginal voices striving to be heard, including but not limited to the 1887 Maloga Petition, the 1927 requests of Jimmy Clements and John Noble, William Cooper's 1937 petition, the 1963 Yirrkala Bark Petitions, the 1988 Barunga Statement, the 1991 song 'Treaty' by Yothu Yindi, the 2001 Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation, the 2016 Redfern Statement, and many, many, more.

We also acknowledge the many injustices still present today that Aboriginal leaders have been campaigning to change for many decades, including Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the lack of Closing the Gap, and the age of criminal responsibility at 10 years old — #RaiseTheAge — and many others. We acknowledge the leadership and courage of Aboriginal peoples over many generations.

Neither Voice, Treaty, and Truth, the 2019 NAIDOC Week theme, nor First Nations justice is about politics. Australia's Constitution should be separate from any political party.

We in the Wellspring Community accept the invitation and echo the invitation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Statement from the Heart to walk together "in a movement of the Australian people for a better future."

The time is now for all peoples of all cultures in these lands now called Australia to embrace and see true justice, healing, and Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the oldest living, continuing cultures in the world.

We in the Wellspring Community will continue to pray, listen, and take action for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for the common good of our nation and our world.