



Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition
of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

26 April 2013

Dear Committee Members

Thank you for the invitation for Recognise/Reconciliation Australia to make a submission to the Committee ahead of the discussion next week.

Consistent with our earlier submissions and our presentation to the last meeting we wish to make the following recommendations. In our view the Committee:

- * Should not reinvent the process undertaken by the Expert Panel but should use the Expert Panel report and process as a starting point;
- * Should break its tasks into defined sections of work and develop a timetable so that post-election a reconstituted committee doesn't have to start over again and can take up where this committee left off;
- * Needs to be accessible and transparent to Indigenous people – providing access to hearings, transcripts and discussion papers (which need to be in plain English where possible);
- * Should be mindful that there is an active group of young Indigenous people who should be incorporated into their processes. Recognise would be more than happy to connect the Committee with these groups;
- * Needs to work with the Indigenous leadership of as broad a range of communities as possible. In our opinion, the invitation list for the first discussion at the NCIE is a good start at representing the diversity of Indigenous communities;
- * Should be mindful that our soundings with many Indigenous people have indicated they expect some input directly and not just through the leadership; and
- * Should engage senior Indigenous community leaders as a valuable resource to facilitate discussions including the National Congress of Australia's First People.

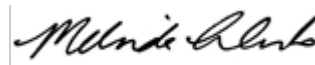
In addition, Recognise now has over 136,000 supporters and has partnered with scores of community organisations who have or are about to hold events. Together with the people who made submissions to the Expert Panel this could form a good database for the Committee to distribute information. In addition, Reconciliation Australia also has over 300 organisations who have implemented Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs). Those RAP organisations employ over 1.2 million people.

We look forward to attending the event on Tuesday 30th April to continue to assist the Committee with its important work and to brief them on the progress of the Recognise project.

Yours sincerely



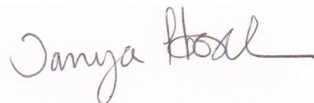
Tom Calma
Co-Chair
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Melinda Cilento
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