

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL FOR ABORIGINAL RECONCILIATION (CAR)

The following were presented as the final recommendations of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in December 2000:

1. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agree to implement and monitor a national framework whereby all governments and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) work to overcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' disadvantage through setting program performance benchmarks that are measurable (including timelines), are agreed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and are publicly reported.
2. All parliaments and local governments pass formal motions of support for the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation and the Roadmap for Reconciliation, enshrine their basic principles in appropriate legislation, and determine how their key recommendations can best be implemented in their jurisdictions.
3. The Commonwealth Parliament prepare legislation for a referendum which seeks to:
 - recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia in a new preamble to the Constitution; and
 - remove section 25 of the Constitution and introduce a new section making it unlawful to adversely discriminate against any people on the grounds of race.
4. Recognising that the formal reconciliation process over the last decade has achieved much and has helped bring Australians together, all levels of government, non-government, business, peak bodies, communities and individuals commit themselves to continuing the process and sustaining it by:
 - affirming the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation and actioning the Roadmap for Reconciliation;
 - providing resources for reconciliation activities and involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their work;
 - undertaking educational and public-awareness activities to help improve understanding and relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community; and
 - supporting Reconciliation Australia, the foundation which has been established to maintain a national leadership focus for reconciliation, report on progress, provide information and raise funds to promote and support reconciliation.
5. Each government and parliament:
 - recognise that this land and its waters were settled as colonies without treaty or consent and that to advance reconciliation it would be most desirable if there were agreements or treaties; and
 - negotiate a process through which this might be achieved that protects the political, legal, cultural and economic position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
6. That the Commonwealth Parliament enact legislation (for which the Council has provided a draft in this report) to put in place a process which will unite all Australians by way of an agreement, or treaty, through which unresolved issues of reconciliation can be resolved.