



Media Release

A number of leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations met with Minister Scullion to forge a pathway for engagement and to demand that our solutions be co-designed

National Congress in collaboration with leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative organisations as signatories to the Redfern Statement 2016 met with the Indigenous Affairs Minister calling for the Government to urgently continue engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations and peoples to ensure the First Peoples of this country have a say about their future and future success of Australia.

“We have a contribution to make and what we want from engagement is to co-design solutions with the Government in a collaborative and respectful way that recognises the values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples” said Rod Little, Co-Chair of National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples.

It is critical that Australia’s First Peoples are properly represented at the national level to ensure meaningful engagement with government, industry and the non-government sectors to advance the priorities of our people.

“In the last generation we’ve had numerous seminal reports which have repeatedly emphasised that our people need to have a genuine say in our own lives and decisions that affect our peoples and communities. This has not been acted on. We are completely dissatisfied with the engagement to date”

This first step in responding to the Redfern Statement brought together a number of leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations all calling for the development of mechanisms to ensure meaningful, genuine and regular engagement.

The meeting provided an opportunity to develop a greater degree of understanding and mutual appreciation of the complexity of the Indigenous Portfolio which requires a whole of government approach.

The next steps must include:

- A meeting between the Prime Minister and the leading signatories of the Redfern Statement;
- At least an annual National Summit with the Prime Minister and his cabinet to share knowledge between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Government representatives;
- A whole of Government approach to co-construct policies to ensure that our pathway forward is co-designed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Government; and

- A commitment from the Government to develop intergovernmental mechanisms to ensure First Peoples have a voice at the highest levels of Government to ensure the Government's focus reflects our values and priorities.

"This Parliament has an unprecedented nation-building opportunity to meaningfully commit to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people determining what success looks like for them and for their communities" Mr Little concluded.

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