



**NATSILS**

National Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander Legal Services

TRUE JUSTICE FOR OUR PEOPLE

## **“Don’t waste this opportunity”: Emergency summit on youth justice must be on PM’s agenda for Indigenous Conference**

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The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) is calling for an emergency summit on youth justice to be on the Prime Minister’s agenda at the inaugural National Indigenous Labor Conference, taking place this weekend.

Nerita Waight, Acting Chair of NATSILS, says, “We welcome the inaugural National Indigenous Labor Conference as an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendees to collaborate on meaningful changes for mob and improve lives across the country.

“The Prime Minister is attending the conference. This is a chance for him to listen to First Nations leaders on the issues that matter to us and implement our calls for decisive action.

“More than 200 organisations and leaders wrote to the Prime Minister calling on him to act on the youth justice crisis that is causing the mass incarceration of our children. Since last week, an additional 800 people and organisations have signed on to our call.

“This crisis must be on the agenda for the conference, and must be treated with the urgency it demands.

“We urge the Prime Minister – don’t waste this opportunity. We need an emergency summit on youth justice. This is one tangible step you can take towards honouring your commitment to reconciliation with First Nations people.”

NATSILS says the Prime Minister not only has the moral obligation to act, but also the legal authority.

“Prime Minister Anthony Albanese knows he has the power to act on this issue. We obtained legal advice from Senior Counsel last year which was very clear; the federal government has the power to override state and territory justice systems to enforce international human rights obligations.

“A copy of this advice was shared with the Prime Minister last year.

“We are more than happy to give the Prime Minister a refresher in legal studies – but this advice makes it clear as day that he has the power to act,” says Ms Waight.

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