



## Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

11<sup>th</sup> Session Palais des Nations, Geneva 9-13 July, 2018

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### Item 8: Panel discussion on recognition, reparation and reconciliation

INTERVENTION by the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council, delivered by Mr Craig Cromelin, Councillor for the Wiradjuri Region

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Thank you Madam Chair

In Australia, there are sadly very few mechanisms that provide for appropriate recognition, reparation or reconciliation.

We still wait for Governments in Australia to commit to the desperately needed dialogue, negotiations and agreement making processes to secure our full rights under the UN Declaration on the Rights Indigenous People.

In Australia in 2017, there was landmark gathering and consensus of First Nations Peoples. The consensus was framed in a document now known as the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*. The Statement from the Heart is a gift to all Australians and provides a roadmap for truth telling, recognition, reparation and reconciliation in Australia. It is a modest and generous invitation from our peoples to the whole nation, to share our 65,000 years of living culture, to make right the wrongs of the past, and move forward together.

The modest price we have asked for this is: to ensure we are heard, with a Voice to Parliament; to tell the truth about our history of dispossession and oppression; and Makarrata, a process of truth telling, conflict resolution, peacemaking, justice and healing.

So far, our generous vision of a reconciled future has not received the support of the Australian Prime Minister and his Government. This is yet another backwards step in the history of hurt and harm of our people. We remain open to a reconciled future, where we, Aboriginal peoples, take our rightful place, in the economic, and social fabric of our Country.

Panel, the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council calls on the Australian and New South Wales Governments:

- to embrace the generous Uluru Statement from the Heart and to **partner with First Nations representative organisations and First Nations peoples to develop a framework for dialogue, negotiation and agreement making in relation to recognition, reparations and reconciliation** based on UN-DRIP.

Our current political leadership want to narrow Australias history to only 230 years – we want to talk about the 65,000 plus years our people have lived on our traditional lands.

Panel my question is:

Panel and States parties, other than Australia, what is the best way to use this and other for a to bring Australias disregard for free, prior and informed consent to the attention of the Human Rights Council where Australia sits with little shame or regard for its domestic responsibilities under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples.

Thank you Panel.