



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on the
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum
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Submission to the Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum

Dear Committee Secretary,

ACFID would like to thank the Inquiry into the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice Referendum for the opportunity to make this submission concerning the provisions of the bill introduced by the Government to be submitted to a referendum on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

ACFID and its Members recognise that indigenous people the world over have the right to self-determination (Article 3, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), and that truth-telling has a vital role in restorative justice and healing. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which calls for a Voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution. It is a crucial step in ensuring the longevity of the Voice and empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our support is set out in ACFID Resolution No.1/2017 [Resolution in Support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart](#) approved at ACFID Council's Annual General Meeting in November 2017. The resolution resolves to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for Makarrata through truth, justice, healing, and agreement-making; and to support the aims and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for substantive constitutional reform, by leveraging our networks and influence. Our support is also outlined in previous [submissions](#) on this matter.

ACFID understands that constitutional recognition through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice is the form of recognition chosen by the Indigenous community, through a thorough process over many years and acknowledges it needs to be able to speak to both the executive and parliament. Without being able to do so the Voice will not be able to deliver meaningful change.

ACFID supports in full the Voice to Parliament and the provisions set out in the Bill that provide for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia in the Constitution through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. The final amendment and referendum question are fit for purpose, are legally sound and should not be changed.

Yours sincerely,

Marc Purcell
CEO
Australian Council for International Development

ACFID is the peak body for Australian non-government organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action. We currently have 128 members and 22 affiliates operating in more than 65 developing countries.