MEDIA RELEASE

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A week to respect and honour First Peoples spiritual and cultural connection to land and sea

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights organisation ANTaR today honours and pays its respects to the connection to land and sea of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - the oldest continuing cultures on the planet.

National Director Andrew Meehan said the week was a great opportunity for all Australians to pause, learn about, and pay respects to the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander country, particularly that on which we walk and live each day, or travel through on a regular basis.

“The ANTaR National office is on Gadigal land which is part of the Eora Nation. Eora is bounded by the Hawkesbury, Nepean, and Georges rivers in the North, West and South of Sydney.

We acknowledge and honour the traditional owners of this country and pay our respects to elders and the First Peoples that have fought for, and preserved it.

ANTaR also honours and pays respects to the custodians of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and sea,” he said.

Mr Meehan noted that as NAIDOC Week commences, an historic discussion between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, the Prime Minister, and the Opposition Leader is underway on recognising the First Australians in the Constitution.

ANTaR calls for the country’s political leaders to listen to the views of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives at the summit today and going forward on this issue.

“Hopefully, the process of engagement with First Peoples on what form recognition takes will be clearer as a result of the summit today,” Mr Meehan said.

Mr Meehan said that recognition of country, culture, language and custodianship, along with addressing discrimination in the nations founding document, has been fought for by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over decades, and ought to be something this nation is capable of doing.

Mr Meehan said he hoped that ANTaR supporters and all Australians will use this week to find out more, honour, and celebrate the oldest living cultures on the planet.

ANTaR is the only non-Indigenous organisation dedicated solely to supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and working to educate the wider community, shape public opinion, and speak up for justice, rights and respect for Australia’s First Peoples.

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