

## **Joint Statement on racism directed at Adam Goodes**

### ***“Australia must and can be better than this”***

Following the weekend’s events when prominent Aboriginal AFL player and former Australian of the Year, Adam Goodes was booed at every turn during the Swans v West Coast Eagles AFL match.

Today in advance of the weekend round of AFL, 150 organisations (listed overleaf) join together to call for renewed efforts to stamp out racism in sport and everyday life.

For too long, we have witnessed the poor treatment of Sydney Swans star and dual Brownlow medallist Adam Goodes at the hands of fans during AFL matches. A proud Ambassador of the “Racism. It Stops with Me” Campaign, Goodes is a strong advocate for standing up against racism and for issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The booing, which has snowballed out of control this year since Goodes proudly displayed his culture during the AFL Indigenous Round, appears to be in large part racially motivated.

Adam Goodes is an outstanding Australian and should be commended for displaying a culture all Australians should celebrate and be proud of, and for taking a courageous stance against racism. The behaviour of the crowd that booed him is absolutely unacceptable and must stop.

To dismiss claims of racism as just banter is to use football as a shield for prejudice. Legitimate barracking for one’s team is a tradition that has been alive as long as the game itself but, when such behaviour coincides with cultural displays and Goodes’ efforts to stop racism, it is clear that a line has been crossed to racial abuse.

To suggest that this kind of behaviour does not have an effect is to deny the evidence about the known health impacts of racism. These are not diminished simply because the person being subjected to racial abuse is an elite athlete. It is deeply disturbing that this kind of racism may influence whether a player decides to take the field for one match or is forced out of the game for good.

If this isn’t stamped out, then we must ask what message this sends to future generations of Australians about the forms of behaviour that we find acceptable in this country. And what message does it send to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about their culture, and what they can expect should they want to excel in sport or other fields.

It is a great stain on our nation that the experience of Adam Goodes is the lived experience of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and there is ample evidence that demonstrates the negative impact on mental and physical health, as well as life opportunities.

Racism has no place in Australian sport or our society at large. We commend the actions that have been taken inside and out of the AFL, but call on all sports and sporting clubs to develop coherent and far reaching strategies in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people to stamp out racism in sport.

As a starting point, codes and clubs should encourage members and supporters to join the 'Racism: It Stops with Me' campaign at <https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au>

Australia must and can be better than this.

This statement is supported by the following organisations:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda -  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
Aboriginal Disability Network NSW  
Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Services  
Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of New South Wales  
Advocacy Tasmania  
Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation  
All Together Now  
Amnesty International  
ANECYS  
ANTaR  
Arab Council Australia  
Arnold Bloch Leibler  
Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council  
Australian College of Midwives  
Australian Council of Social Services  
Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)  
Australian Football League Players Association  
Australian Hellenic Council  
Australian Human Rights Centre, UNSW.  
Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association  
Australian Indigenous Psychologist Association (AIPA)  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)  
Australian Lawyers for Human Rights  
Australian Medical Association (AMA)  
Australian Physiotherapy Association  
Australian Student & Novice Nurse Association  
B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation Commission  
Bisexual Alliance Victoria  
Bond University  
Catholic Education South Australia  
Centacare South West NSW  
Centre for Multicultural Youth  
Chinese Australian Forum (CAF)  
Chinese Australian Services Society Ltd ( CASS Group)  
Coleman Rail  
Commission for Equal Opportunity South Australia  
Commissioner for Children and Young People Victoria  
Commonwealth Ombudsman  
Communication Rights Australia

Confederation of Australian Motor Sport  
Corrs Chambers Westgarth  
Craig Edmonds Consulting Services  
CRANaplus  
Cricket Australia  
Deaths in Custody Watch Committee Inc WA  
Disability Discrimination Legal Services  
Diversity Council of Australia  
Eastern Community Legal Centre  
Edith Cowan University  
Executive Council of Australian Jewry  
Family Worker Training and Development Programme  
Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)  
Federation University  
First Peoples Disability Network (Australia)  
Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre  
Flinders University  
Football Federation Australia (FFA)  
Goldfields Land and Sea Council  
Healing Foundation  
Human Rights Council of Australia  
Human Rights Law Centre  
Indigenous Allied Health Australia  
Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, UTS  
Justice Connect  
Know the Game  
Koori Mail  
KPMG  
Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation  
Lendlease  
Liberty Victoria  
Marrickville Council  
Melbourne High School  
Menzies School of Health Research  
Mildura Rural City Council  
Misschu  
Muru Marri, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW Australia  
Naracoorte Lucindale Council  
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Mental Health  
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services  
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Health Worker Association  
National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (NACCHO)  
National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Association  
National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Physiotherapists  
National Association of Community Legal Centres  
National Australia Bank

National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE)  
National Congress of Australia's First Peoples  
National Native Title Council  
National Rugby League (NRL)  
Netball Australia – Julia Symons  
Northside Community Service Association  
NSW Aboriginal Land Council  
NSW Jewish Board of Deputies  
OCTEC  
Office of the Lord Mayor, City of Sydney  
Oxfam Australia  
People with Disability Australia Incorporated  
Play by the Rules  
Podmore Foundation  
Professor Tom Calma AO – founding Chair of the Close the Gap Campaign  
Public Health Association of Australia  
Public Transport Ombudsman VIC  
QANTAS  
Queensland Anti Discrimination Commission  
Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services (QAIL)  
Race Discrimination Commissioner Dr Tim Soutphommasane –  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
Randwick City Council  
Recognise  
Reconciliation Australia  
Reconciliation South Australia  
Red Dust Role Models  
Refugee & Immigration Legal Centre  
Refugee Council of Australia  
Richmond Football Club  
Save the Children  
SBS  
SCALES Community Legal Centre  
Scanlon Foundation  
Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care  
Settlement Services International  
Shire of Katanning  
Sisters Inside  
Skilled Migrant Professionals  
So Change Inc  
Softball Australia  
St Vincent de Paul Society  
Table Tennis Australia  
TCL Drilling Australia  
The Armenian National Committee of Australia  
The Bridge of Hope Foundation Inc

The Castan Centre – Monash University  
The Challenging Racism Project, University of Western Sydney  
The Chinese Australian Services Society Ltd (CASS Group)  
The Construction Training Centre Qld  
The Fred Hollows Foundation  
The Lowitja Institute  
The National Welfare Rights Network  
The Passion of Purpose Group  
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia  
Transfield  
Transgender Victoria  
Twitter Australia  
Unions NSW  
Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress  
Uniting Church In Australia  
University of South Australia -  
Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation  
Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd  
Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service  
Victorian College of the Arts  
Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture  
Walpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation  
Welcoming Intercultural Neighbours  
Whyndam Community and Education Centre  
Wilin Centre  
Wirrpanda Foundation  
Women in Prison Advocacy Network (WIPAN)  
Women's Legal Services NSW  
Yarraville Community Centre  
YWCA