

MEDIA RELEASE



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Barometer cause for optimism but we need to build trust

ANTaR is heartened by the findings in the most recent Reconciliation Barometer report that relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are perceived to be improving and that this relationship is viewed as important by the majority of Australians.

“While the report reveals low levels of awareness about Indigenous peoples and cultures, it encouragingly shows a genuine desire among non-Indigenous Australians to learn more about our First Peoples,” said Dr Peter Lewis, ANTaR National President.

“The Constitutional recognition referendum process offers us an historic opportunity to inform and educate the community about Indigenous history, culture, identity and rights.”

However, the low levels of trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (at just 9%) and high levels of prejudice suggest that we all have work to do to reset relationships on a footing of mutual respect and recognition.

“Our leaders should be showing us the way by treating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with respect, recognising their unique status as First Peoples and partnering with Indigenous communities on issues that affect them,” said Dr Lewis.

ANTaR notes that a number of Indigenous organisations and leaders have expressed concern that the tone of the Prime Minister’s Closing the Gap address to Parliament last week did not show appropriate respect and sensitivity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

“We call on the Prime Minister and her Government to show leadership by ensuring its commitment to reset the relationship and close the gap is reflected in its words and actions,” said Dr Lewis.

ANTaR is a national advocacy organisation dedicated specifically to the rights - and overcoming the disadvantage - of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Media contacts: ANTaR National President - Peter Lewis 0400 586 617

ANTaR relies on the support of generous donations to continue its work supporting the rights and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.