

MEDIA RELEASE



28 January, 2011

ANTaR Welcomes Coalition Openness on Constitutional Recognition

ANTaR today welcomed the comments of Ken Wyatt, the Coalition's representative on the Expert Panel looking into Constitutional Recognition for Australia's First Peoples, that his party would be open to considering recognition beyond a mere change to the Constitution's preamble.

"The issue of recognising the First Peoples in the Constitution is one that requires genuine consultation and genuine openness to the views of the First Peoples and the general community," ANTaR National President, Peter Lewis said today.

"Constitutional recognition is all about foundations and it is by having solid foundations that our nation can transcend its racist past and move towards honour and maturity," he said.

"To introduce a preamble that recognises the First Peoples without considering other possible changes to the constitution to enhance the meaning of that recognition would endanger rather than enhance the clear need to reset the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the general community."

"Our hope is that this year of consultation and community discussion will be one that enables us all to honestly interrogate ourselves as a nation. We need to answer the question – have we the boldness, strength and will to create a vision for the future based on justice, truth and application of our 'fair go' values to those for whom a fair go has been denied for over two centuries?"

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

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

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