

Call to the Liberal-National Party to reconsider their position on Treaty and reconciliation in Victoria

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The Victorian Opposition's recent announcement to abandon bipartisan support for the treaty process in Victoria strikes at the heart of the reconciliation process. To do so without informing the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria (FPAV) and in the lead-up to 26th January is insulting and cruel.

First Nations people have not only suffered from a fraught referendum campaign but now see various reconciliation processes in state and territories being set back as oppositions appear to turn their backs on First Nations people.

We therefore must ask the following question of the Liberal and National Parties: have you abandoned reconciliation?

Treaty-making is simply about forging agreements between interested parties. The National Agreement on Closing the Gap between jurisdictions and the Coalition of Peaks, a Morrison government initiative, is one such example. Such agreements can be beneficial for the general economy as it creates clarity and certainty for the various economic players rather than have matters played out in the courts and subject to complex legal arguments. This is why so many businesses supported the referendum.

It is clear from research – national and international – as well as affirmed in the Productivity Commission's draft report on Closing the Gap – that the key to addressing Indigenous disadvantage is self-determination, culturally-attuned solutions and addressing racism in the general community. Creating better

foundations for engagement is the key – so voice, truth-telling and treaty-making are the best ways to closing the gap, not only in outcomes but also in how we relate to each other and how we can become a modern nation united in its diversity.

We call on the Victorian State Opposition to reconsider their position on truth-telling, treaty-making and reconciliation and restore bi-partisan support for these critical processes.

Signed by:

ANTAR

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ANTAR is a national advocacy organisation working for Justice, Rights and Respect for Australia's First Peoples. We do this primarily through campaigns, advocacy, and lobbying.