

A reflection for May

“Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 3

Self-determination is a foundational principle of cultural safety for Indigenous and Tribal peoples and the primary approach for achieving effective and sustainable improvement in outcomes for Indigenous and Tribal communities.

In its submission to Australia’s Universal Periodic Review (2026), the International Presentation Association highlighted the failures of the Australian government to advance the self-determination of Australia’s First Nations peoples by not implementing the recommendations of various United Nations bodies and civil society organisations to:


- recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution;
- implement processes for meaningful consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decisions affecting their rights;
- advance representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within national political structures.

Therefore, the International Presentation Association calls upon the Australian government to:

- re-examine the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and implement the recommendations within it, including the establishment of a Makarrata Commission and an Indigenous legislative body;
- adopt crucial elements of the defeated 2023 Referendum, including the revision of the Constitution to recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, remove racist elements and include an anti-discrimination clause;
- take steps to uphold its commitments to ending racial discrimination;
- ensure adequate representation of, and consultation with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the fulfilment of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the ratification of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.

As we prepare for National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June), let us commit wholeheartedly to reconciliation with Australia’s First Nations peoples by advocating for their rights to self-determination through recognition, consultation and representation. This year’s theme for National Reconciliation Week, *All In*, reminds us that reconciliation requires us all to take action to make change.

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**Holy Father, God of Love,
You are the Creator of all things.**

**We acknowledge
the pain and shame of our history
and the sufferings of our peoples,
and we ask your forgiveness.**

**We thank you for the
survival of Indigenous cultures.
Our hope is in you because you gave your
Son Jesus to reconcile the world to you.**

**We pray for your strength and grace
to forgive, accept and love one another,
as you love us and forgive and accept us
in the sacrifice of your Son.**

**Give us the courage
to accept the realities of our history
so that we may build a better
future for our Nation.**

**Teach us to
respect all cultures.
Teach us to care for
our land and waters.
Help us to share justly
the resources of this land.
Help us to bring about
spiritual and social change
to improve the quality of life
for all groups in our communities,
especially the disadvantaged.
Help young people to find
true dignity and self-esteem
by your Spirit.**

**May your power and love
be the foundations on which we build
our families, our communities
and our Nation, through
Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*"Reconciliation Prayer" (1997) by the
Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group*