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Professor Peter Yu calls for economic determination amongst Aboriginal People

Esteemed Aboriginal leader, Professor Peter Yu AM, has delivered a powerful speech calling for economic self-determination for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley and other Aboriginal communities as a way of breaking the cycle of inequality.

Delivering the University of Notre Dame Australia's annual Nulungu Reconciliation Lecture at the Broome Campus, proud Yawuru man and The Australian National University's Vice-President (First Nations) Professor Yu said, "I see the potential for growing an Aboriginal economy incorporating land management, tourism, renewable energy, housing development and whole range of services which could translate to full employment of all our people who are able to work."

"As necessary, as you might think the current national commitment to 'closing the gap' is good and needed, believe me it will not deliver its intended purpose."

Professor Yu told the audience he sees reconciliation through an economic lens and believes that economic determination is the best way for First Nations people to end government dependency.

"It's about First Nations economic development on our terms," he said. "It is about how development occurs on First Nations land under the guidelines that Australia has signed up to under the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples."

Advocating for a Voice to Parliament, Professor Yu added, "this is why it is fundamental and critical that the Voice to Parliament is able to work and advise the executive of government, this is where it will all happen."

Professor Yu also shared his long personal journey towards reconciliation dating back to the 1970s in remote Kimberley communities, including major political and policy milestones including the Mabo agreement and Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

"I have a sense that we are at a point of national reckoning. The Uluru Statement has promoted an unprecedented dialogue about the relationship between First Nations people and the Australian Nation

State.”

Delivered to an audience of community members, students, staff and academics, Professor Yu outlined the themes that are emerging through his work in collaboration with First Nations people, academic researchers, industry and government.

The lecture series aims to provide a public avenue for prominent Aboriginal leaders to contribute to ongoing discussions relating to Reconciliation and how progress can be achieved.

Other positions held by Professor Yu include Deputy Chair of the Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, Board member of Watertrust Australia Trustee of the Princes Trust Australia, Council Member of JANA Sustainability Advisory and Chair of the Australian Advisory Group to Rio Tinto.

About the *Nulungu Research Institute*

To find out more about the Nulungu Research Institute and the Nulungu Reconciliation Lecture Series please visit: <https://www.notredame.edu.au/research/nulungu/home>

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