

MEDIA RELEASE

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Time for Treaty

Together with many of our 40 social services members, our faith communities, bishops, and religious congregations, CSSV supports the calls for change as articulated by the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#). The invitation of this Statement is an invitation to embrace the calls of our First Nations Peoples for a just future, a means of recognition and a way forward for healing and learning together. This statement calls for Treaty.

CSSV remains committed to building a better future for our First Nations people. We believe that a better future for all Australians is contingent on this work being done. CSSV recognises that negotiating a successful Treaty in Victoria is one element in a much broader reckoning and process, and so we remain committed to this alongside Truth Telling and a Voice to Parliament as positive ways forward. We are grateful for the [Yoorrook Justice Commission](#) and [First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria](#), which are both integral in pursuing a better way of being and better future for all Victorians.

For a better future for all Victorians, CSSV believe that having our whole Victorian parliament, with bi-partisan support and engagement, involved and supportive of Treaty-making processes is the best way forward. This work should be collegiate, a process of building mutual understanding as a Treaty is developed. It is disappointing that there is no longer bi-partisan support for this work, with the Coalition recently announcing the withdrawal of its support.

CSSV executive director, Joshua Lourensz, says, 'We stand particularly with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and friends in this moment. We think of our life member Vicki Clark OAM, former Coordinator of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Victoria, who was core to laying the foundations for the Treaty process. We remain hopeful that we can continue to draw from the good will of so many in working toward healing and reconciliation into the future, and that the process of Treaty making will be a moment that brings us together.'

'We know from our extensive engagement through being a member of the [One Journey, Together initiative](#) working group there is a deep desire from many within the Catholic and wider community, including social services, health and education, our bishops, clergy and congregations, and our parishes, that want to see renewed and different relationships between contemporary Australians from a variety of rich global cultural heritages and First Nations people. Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we continue to hope and work so that "all may have life and have it to the full".'

'CSSV remains committed to the complex work of reconciliation — and see Treaty as one aspect of this. We need to bring about tangible change and healing in our country.'

CSSV remains committed to listening and supporting the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) and other First Nations community leaders as we join in the hope articulated by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in their most recent 2023/24 social justice statement, [Listen Learn Love](#): "We hope for an end to the pain, the hurt and the injustice that has burdened the First Peoples of this land for far too long. Let us commit ourselves to fostering a civilisation of love in Australia. Let's come together in friendship and love to show all that love can not only change individual lives, but that it can change society for the better."

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