



Edmund Rice Centre

Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

September 2018 No.2

Dear All,

Welcome to the 2nd Edition of ERC Justice Updates your regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on all sorts of matters relating to social and environmental justice. I do hope you found the 1st Edition sent out on August 17th interesting and informative.

REMEMBER WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Please do send us your feedback or any information you think would be good to include in further updates.

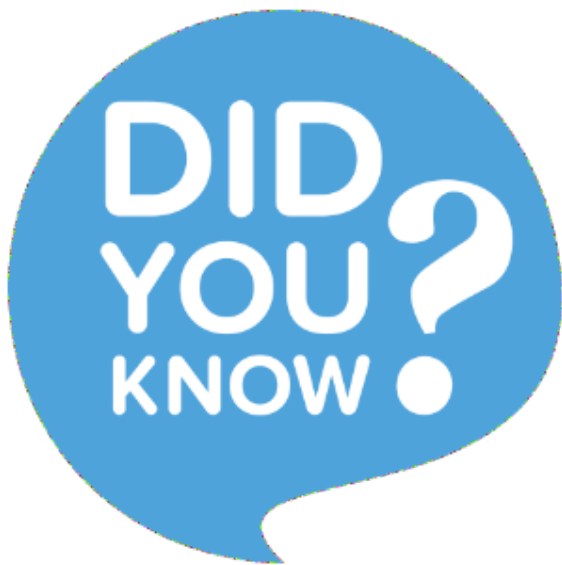
Thanks to everyone who gave me much assistance in producing what I hope will become a relevant and useful resource for everyone. Please feel free to forward onto anyone you think may be interested.

Regards

Marita

**Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney**

- On Monday September 17th, the Australian government will have



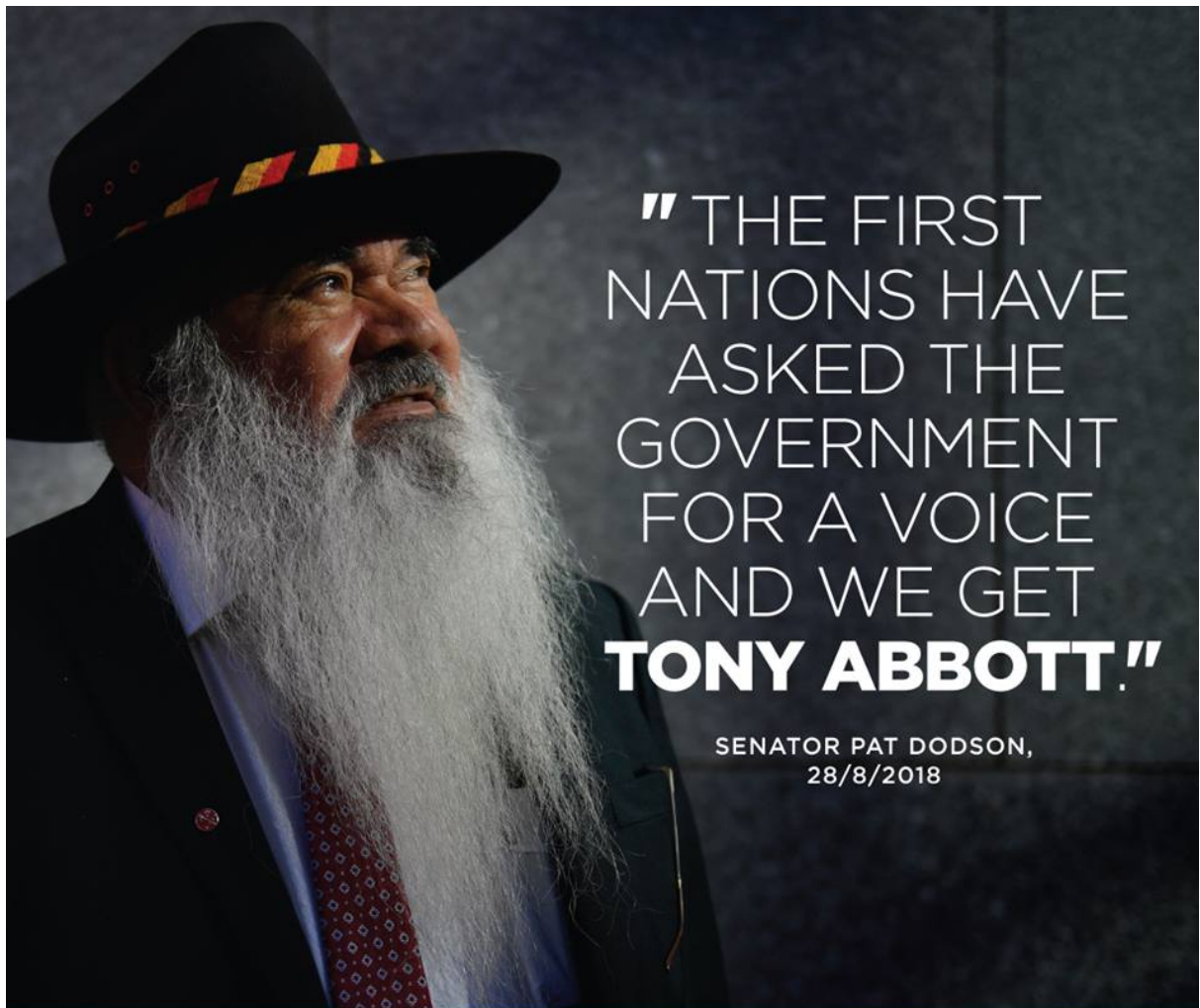
**detained men, women & children
on Nauru & Manus Island for 1878
DAYS**

- An estimated **1,534 people are still on Nauru or PNG as of 29 July 2018, and as of 30 June 2018, 219** are still in Nauru Regional Processing Centre
- **Taner Kilic Hon. Chair Amnesty Turkey freed after 432 days in prison.**
Kumi Naidoo Sec. Gen. Amnesty International:
"It has taken us more than a year of campaigning and struggle to get here but Taner has finally been freed and is safely back at the arms of his wife and daughters"
- **147 Indigenous people have died over the last decade and 407 have died since the end of the royal commission into deaths in custody in 1991** (Guardian

Aust. 28th August 2018)

On May 26th 2017 THE ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART, the outcome of a long period of consultation with many Indigenous communities and groups all over the country, was presented to the then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull . Five months later in October 2017 after the statement was not endorsed by Cabinet Mr Turnbull announced in a press release "THE ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART was not capable of winning acceptance (in a referendum)."

Then in August 2018 after several weeks of turmoil in Australia's Federal Liberal Party we have a new Prime Minister Scott Morrison who announces former Prime Minister & now backbencher Tony Abbott MP as a 'Special Envoy' for Indigenous Affairs. Elder indigenous statesman and the Father of Reconciliation Labor Senator Patrick Dodson had this to say.



FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE DESERVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE.
Send this message to your local MP



ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness*.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take *a rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle*. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

***“The future
belongs to those
who believe in
the beauty
of
their dreams.”***

- Eleanor Roosevelt

REFLECTIONS

What is the unmistakable mark of a wise man? It is Love, Love for all humanity.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

When we are dreaming alone it is only a dream. When we are dreaming with others, it is the beginning of reality. Dom Helder Camara

Powerlessness and silence go together. We ... should use our privileged positions not as a shelter from the world's reality, but as a platform from which to speak. A voice is a gift. It should be cherished and used.

Margaret Atwood

There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children. Nelson Mandela 1996

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change. Paulo Coelho - 'The Devil and Miss Prym'

No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There's too much work to do.

Dorothy Day, The Catholic Worker

Hope is the strongest driving force for a people. Hope which brings about change, which produces new realities, is what opens man's road to freedom. Once hope has taken hold, courage must unite with wisdom. That is the only way of avoiding violence, the only way of maintaining the calm one needs to respond peacefully to offenses.

Oscar Arias Sanchez, excerpted from his 1987 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech.

Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is a daily admission of one's weakness . . . And so, it is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.

Gandhi



His Excellency Anote Tong with PCP's Vincent Sicari @ COP23 Bonn Climate Change Conference, November 2017

Pacific Calling Partnership News

Former President of Kiribati to visit Australia in October

In October the Pacific Calling Partnership will be hosting His Excellency Anote Tong in Australia.

Mr Tong will be in Australia from the 15th of October to the 25th of October and will be visiting Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. During that time the Pacific Calling Partnership are arranging meetings with politicians and community leaders. We are also arranging some public meetings and press interviews.

Mr Tong, who was president of Kiribati from 2003 to 2013, is among the most prominent advocates for urgent global action on climate change. Former President Tong's country, the Pacific island nation of Kiribati, is one of the first places to confront sea level rise and other devastating real-life consequences of climate change.

Mr Tong is a strong voice for the Pacific and has been campaigning for climate justice for his people and those of the Pacific for many years. Bringing his voice to Australia is especially important in the current circumstances where Australians are engaged in a debate about the

continued mining and use of coal. The Pacific Calling Partnership is bringing Mr Tong to Australia in an effort to change the terms of the climate change debate in this country.

During his visit, Mr Tong will have the opportunity to present his case to the people of Australia at various forums. His aim is to convince the Australian people and Australian politicians that the future of Kiribati is dependent on bold action from countries such as Australia. According to the United Nations, the low lying island nations of the Pacific are facing an "existential threat" from rising sea levels. The latest research actually suggests that they may become "uninhabitable" beyond mid-century. Mr Tong has highlighted the possible need for his people to seek a place of safety in the extreme of having to migrate. In this eventuality he has reiterated that he is seeking migration with dignity for his people. Mr Tong considers it is a moral imperative for Australia to do as much as it can to help. These islands have been looking to Australia for many years for leadership. PCP considers that are falling down in that duty. Mr Tong's visit will follow the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on 1.5C. and will come ahead of the Climate Vulnerable Summit in late November and COP24 in December. In the lead up to a Federal election, it would be very timely to highlight the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, the leadership of Pacific peoples in driving solutions, and the need for Australia to play a role.

The PCP aims to transmit the voice of the Pacific to as wide an audience as possible in Australia. PCP's Vincent Sicari has said, *"Their problem will become our problem soon enough. The implications for Australian foreign policy are immense as the in-roads of Chinese diplomacy in the Pacific is already showing. The Pacific knows what Australia is doing in terms of climate change policy and they are concerned, and very disappointed, even angry."*

While Australia has made some efforts to curb its greenhouse gases, the perception of Australia in the Pacific is of a nation exporting vast amounts of coal which will inevitably produce carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. The clear message for Mr Tong has for Australia is that its economy should not be the sole priority when the very existence of nations like Kiribati and Tuvalu hangs in the balance.

Over the coming weeks the PCP will be publishing details of the events that Mr Tong will be attending should you wish to participate. Some of the events already scheduled to put in your diary are:

- Screening of Aote's Ark followed by Q & A, Melbourne, 15th October
- Facebook Live, hosted by Caritas, 18th October
- Kiribati community, reception at Edmund Rice Centre in Flemington, 20th October
- Climate Reality, public talk in Melbourne, 22nd October
- Sydney Ideas, public talk at Sydney University, October 24th 6:00pm
- Inter-congregational Voice, address at Good Samaritan Offices, Glebe, Oct 25th 5:30pm.

Contact: Vincent Sicari 0413707271

Media Release 31st August 2018

AUSTRALIA'S COMMITMENT TO THE PACIFIC? NO WAY TO TREAT FAMILY

31st August 2018

https://www.erc.org.au/australia_s_commitment_to_the_pacific



Nisqually Tribal Council Member Hanford McCloud lights sacred fire to open up 17th Protecting Mother Earth conference.

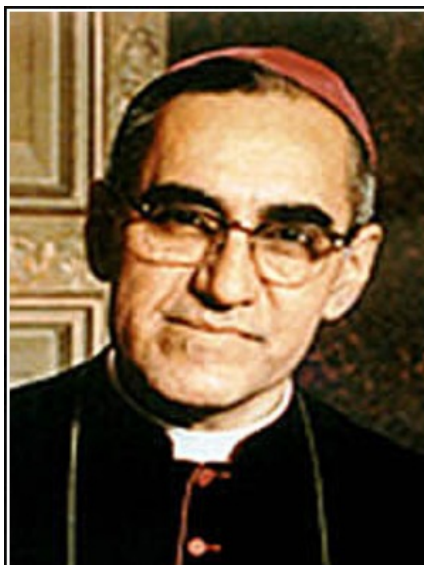
(Photo: Rudi Tcruz)

Why Defending Indigenous Rights Is Integral to Fighting Climate Change

Historic conference asserts Indigenous peoples' rights as a climate change solution

Jade Begay, Ayşe Gürsöz, Common Dreams, September 06, 2018

Read more <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2018/09/06/why-defending-indigenous-rights-integral-fighting-climate-change>



The ones who have a voice must
speak for those who are voiceless.

— Oscar Romero —

AZ QUOTES