

Central Land Council

The Land is always alive..

Council NEWS



The joint NT land council meeting at Barunga in June ended with the signing of the Barunga Agreement by the chairs of all four land councils and NT Chief Minister Michael Gunner.

BARUNGA AGREEMENT SIGNED



Deputy chair Sammy Butcher signed the agreement on behalf of the CLC.

The four NT land councils made history at Barunga again when they signed an agreement to start work towards a treaty between the NT government and Aboriginal Territorians.

The Barunga Agreement comes 30 years after Aboriginal leaders delivered the Barunga Statement and were promised a national treaty.

It is the start of a long process aimed at delivering Aboriginal people greater control over their lives.

"I hope a treaty will settle us down together and bring us self-determination," said CLC chair Francis Kelly.

"Today we bounced the ball but we don't want to stay the only players in this game. The next steps must be led by Aboriginal people across the Territory so that everyone can have their say."

The government will now appoint an independent Aboriginal treaty

commissioner to lead 12 months of consultations in towns and communities.

Council members heard about international examples of treaties and the pros and cons.

It became very clear that they don't want symbolic gestures but substantial change for communities in all the areas the Territory government controls, for example education, housing, health, police, justice, local government, culture and sacred site protection.

Mr Gunner said he is open to negotiating about anything Aboriginal people want in a treaty (or treaties) and that "the old way is finished".

Opposition leader Bill Shorten promised to support an NT treaty if Labor wins the federal election.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion stopped short of support, saying only he'd "look at it very carefully."



Delegates broke into regional groups for discussions.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE HEARS VIEWS ON CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM



Harry Nelson and Barbara Shaw read out the CLC delegates' Brumby Plains Statement.

At the same time as talking about an NT treaty, delegates are continuing to push for reform of the Australian Constitution.

Harold Nelson and Barb Shaw told a public hearing of the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition that CLC members support the Uluru Statement's call for a voice to power, treaties and truth

telling.

The committee's co-chair, Senator Pat Dodson, is working with federal politicians from all parties to build support for these aims despite Prime Minister Turnbull's public rejection of the statement.

The committee will submit an interim report at the end of July.

DELEGATES REJECT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ABA CHANGES



Front row: Jacob Spencer, Willy Johnson, Harry Nelson and Norbert Patrick.

Aboriginal Benefit Account grants are for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory. Land councils have strongly advocated that Aboriginal people should be able to decide who gets these grants. Members heard about changes the federal government wants to make to the ABA. They resolved to reject the changes because they do not meet their expectations of greater Aboriginal

control over the ABA. The land councils reaffirmed their support for the 12 principles for reforming the ABA which they had developed last year and to continue to negotiate with the government. The delegates also called for the establishment of a working group to develop changes that can be agreed to by all.

GETTING READY FOR THE 90TH CONISTON ANNIVERSARY



The Coniston commemoration will be at Mr Long's outstation.

Communities are preparing for the 90th anniversary of the Coniston Massacre at Yurrkuru (Brooks Soak) where they plan to remember the Aboriginal men, women and children who were killed during a series of massacres in 1928. Chief Minister Michael Gunner told delegates he will be at Yurrkuru to pay his respects to the victims on the morning of Friday, 24 August. Mr Gunner said he feels strongly that these atrocities need to be acknowledged and the truth about them needs to be shared.

ABORIGINAL AREAS PROTECTION AUTHORITY



Lynette Granites. Members noted the contribution to sacred sites protection Lynette Granites made on the AAPA board and they renominated her for another term.

CLOSING THE GAP 'REFRESH'



Sammy Butcher and Ian Anderson listen to the delegates.

Professor Ian Anderson, the federal government's Deputy Secretary for Indigenous Affairs, presented about the Closing the Gap 'Refresh' work it plans to do in the next ten years if it is re-elected. Launched in 2008, the Closing the Gap strategy has failed to achieve most of its goals. Its 10 year anniversary is a chance to find out why and reset its future. Members spoke up strongly in favour of new targets for housing and law and justice.



Sabella Turner spoke up about child protection.



Josie Douglas and Jimmy Wavehill in regional group discussions.



Ashley Martin reflected on the land rights history.

THUMBS DOWN FOR CDP PLANS



Senator Scullion defended his new CDP penalty process.

The federal government's work-for-the-dole scheme, the CDP, replaced the RJCP in 2015, which in turn had replaced CDEP. Delegates heard that the government will impose a harsh new penalty process, the so-called targeted compliance framework, on remote CDP regions from the start of next February. This is a big worry because it will add to the devastation the CDP has already caused. It mean less money for already struggling families and risks trapping people in a cycle of penalties. Minister Scullion also announced a few positive changes: support for 6,000 jobs in remote communities and a new work capacity assessment processes he claims will be fairer. Delegates were disappointed that he has failed to address discrimination in the design of the CDP and how it affects people. They voted to oppose the reform measures and called for improvements to the reforms and the adoption of the alternative remote employment program developed by the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APONT).

NEXT EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

ALICE SPRINGS

11-12 July 2018

8-9 August 2018

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

NEAR YUENDUMU

22-24 August 2018

like us on **facebook**

www.facebook.com/CentralLC