

A day of sadness and reflection

The national referendum delivered a sobering result. Not the outcome hoped for by all of us supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart and who campaigned to change the constitution to recognise First Nations people by establishing the Voice to Parliament.

It is a moment of deep reflection as once again, our Aboriginal and Torres Islander communities have responded with grace, kindness, and resilience. Many of them have waited and worked a lifetime for change, and this is a heartbreaking outcome.

We acknowledge the incredible strength and leadership of First Nations leaders.

We are profoundly grateful to our First Nations people for their generous invitation to walk with them in this defining moment of our nation's history.

It has been and always will be our privilege to support the oldest continuing culture of the world.

To the thousands of multicultural communities and leaders across the country who embraced the Voice to Parliament campaign imbued with a heartfelt call for change— Thank you.

When we walked with the First Nations peoples in the last six weeks, we saw that...

- in spite of fear, there is courage,
- in spite of hostility, there is empathy,
- in spite of division, there is solidarity.

Today may be a setback but together, we have built the foundations of a stronger compact for the future.

We will continue to stand side by side with First Nations people in charting a fair, just, and inclusive Australia.

Together, we are a force for good.

In solidarity,

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)