



12 January 2013

The Prime Minister  
Parliament of Australia  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Julia Gillard

Members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) gathered at our Yearly Meeting in Canberra this week have asked me to write to you to in regard to our relationship with our Aboriginal and Torres Straits brothers and sisters in coming into right relationship with Australia's First Peoples.

We welcome and commend the government and Parliament's work towards Constitutional reform through the removal of the ability of Australian governments to pass race-based and discriminatory laws and the insertion of a preamble in the Constitution to recognise the unique relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land.

We are also aware of the request by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for Australian governments to acknowledge their sovereignty over their traditional custodial lands, known as 'Country'. We would support this request. Sovereignty is essential for self-determination, an outcome we as a Nation have committed to by becoming a signatory to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The pursuit of a Treaty or Treaties between Australian governments and Australia's First Nations Peoples, as part of this process, is an avenue we would hope the Government is prepared to consider as we pursue our collective wish to create a just and equitable Australia for all its Peoples.

We will hold you all in the light as you labour with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait brothers and sisters in your pursuit to make this hope a reality.

In peace

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maxine C Cooper".

Maxine C Cooper  
Presiding Clerk, Australia Yearly Meeting

cc: Minister for Families, Community Services & Indigenous  
Affairs Jenny Macklin

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