



ASSEMBLY ROUNDS OUT YEAR WITH CRITICAL STEPS TOWARD TREATY

Tuesday, 8 December 2020

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria (the Assembly) has rounded out 2020 with another successful Chamber meeting of its democratically elected members who are all proud Victorian Traditional Owners.

The Assembly made a critical step in shaping the Treaty Negotiation Framework, voting for the Assembly to adopt a negotiating position where everything is on the table.

This means future Treaties could include everything except for matters outside of Victoria's constitutional authority and those which would interfere with gains already secured by Traditional Owners in Victoria.

This decision gives the broadest possible scope and reach for future Treaties while also protecting the hard work and rights that have already been achieved by community and Traditional Owners.

The Assembly also agreed to hold and administer the future Self-Determination Fund through a trust. Details on the design of the trust will be considered in future Chamber meetings.

The Self-Determination Fund, when established, will provide true independence from the Government, giving Victorian Traditional Owners and the Treaty process its own independent source of funding.

The Assembly resolved to make a public statement regarding 26 January and including it in the core work of the Assembly through Treaty-making and Truth-Telling. Details of the public statement will be settled in the coming weeks.

Uncle Michael "Mookeye" Bell was successfully elected as a Director on the Assembly's board, filling the position left vacant by Rueben Berg. Uncle Mookeye is a proud Gunditjmara man with strong connections to the South West.

Professor Megan Davis presented to the Assembly about the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, providing an international context for Treaty making and human rights in Victoria and Australia.

Due to Covid-19, the Chamber meeting was held online across two days, with parts of the meeting streamed live on the Assembly's Facebook account for the community to watch.

For more information on the Assembly or Victoria's Treaty process visit firstpeoplesvic.org

Quote attributable to Co-Chair Auntie Geraldine Atkinson

"It's been another successful gathering of our Assembly where we've had robust discussions and we've made some really critical decisions as we work towards Treaties in Victoria."

Quote attributable to Co-Chair Marcus Stewart

"This has been a tough but productive year for our community and our Members and I'm proud of everything we've achieved and the strides we've made on the path to Treaties."

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