



**First Peoples'  
Assembly of  
Victoria**

**First Speech by Rueben Berg  
Inaugural Meeting of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria**

**10 December 2019**

I acknowledge all people here today. I acknowledge all those who have worked hard across generations to get us to this point today. I acknowledge all those who have participated in this process so far, including members of the Aboriginal community Assembly, those who stood as candidates and those who came out to vote.

I acknowledge all my amazing family, and in particular my dad and my two children, Kalinga and Jira [Spelling to be confirmed], who are the reasons why I am here today. My family give me strength and wisdom from the past and hope for the future. I am hopeful for this process, hopeful that it will bring communities together, hopeful that it will bring our Aboriginal community closer together, hopeful that it will also bring our community closer with all Victorians, hopeful that this will empower our people now and in the future to give us control of our lives, our communities, our lands and our waters. But I do not expect this to be easy.

As others have mentioned, I expect us to have to have some tough conversations. We are a diverse community, and we all come with different experiences and different ideas. But I hope we can come together with respect, with patience and with trust and to be able to draw from our collective wisdom, from each other and from our ancestors to work towards a shared vision for the future. It is an honour and a privilege to be part of this process. Thank you. Wurruk.

