

RECONCILIATION TASMANIA YOUTH SPEAKOUT 2022
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2022

Good afternoon and welcome to these 2022 Reconciliation Tasmania's Youth Speakout presentations.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

This is the fifth year of Reconciliation Tasmania's Youth Speakout. May I first congratulate Reconciliation Tasmania's Board Co-Chair, Clair Andersen, and Board Member, Mark Redmond, for ensuring the continuation of this excellent initiative. May I also congratulate all the parents and teachers for your support.

Importantly, may I acknowledge all the students here today who have participated. You have truly answered the call of this year's theme: "Be Brave. Make Change."

Your decision as students to take on this work is commendable. As we all know, change is never easy. It is especially difficult when we consider our historical circumstances in Australia that bring us here today. So, you have been brave, to speak out and tried to make change.

We can say, that as slow and painful as change is, in the path to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, change is formally on the move now. And this is to be welcomed.

The referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament will be held during the next financial year. That was the commitment of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, following talks with more than 60 prominent Indigenous voices, in September.

One nationwide poll has recorded that 64 per cent of Australians are in favour of constitutional change. That is a significant majority at this stage, given that there are uncertainties about the model to be presented.

At this event last year, I said: “It is, I think, healing for non-Indigenous Tasmanians to acknowledge that our Aboriginal people have looked after this country for tens of thousands of years and that we have a strong Aboriginal community with a continuity of cultural practices and highly visible island identity.”

Reconciliation is our Nation’s most important pathway. We should pursue it diligently, honestly, and with the aim for eventual success. So, as you have now demonstrated, you are part of this pathway towards a better, reconciled Australia.

Again, I congratulate you all. Don and I admire and respect your commitment. May I also extend my thanks to your parents, teachers and schools, and to Reconciliation Tasmania.

Thank you.

David ... [invites Mark Redmond to respond]