

WEDNESDAY 26th OCTOBER 2011 11:30PM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCCUPY MELBOURNE CALLS FOR TREATY WITH THE FIRST NATIONS OF AUSTRALIA

Occupy Melbourne's 8th General Assembly passed a proposal, put forward by the Indigenous Working Group, to support the creation of a treaty between the First Nations of Australia and the Australian Commonwealth Government.

The call for recognition of Aboriginal Sovereignty gained public prominence in Australia with the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra in 1972.

At the 1988 Barunga culture and sporting festival Prime Minister Bob Hawke declared his intention to negotiate a treaty with the Aboriginal First Nations by 1990. Yet, such a treaty was never established.

In December this year the Australian Government will consider options for formally recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution.

Robbie Thorpe, member of Occupy Melbourne's Indigenous Working Group, argues that Constitutional recognition isn't enough to protect the sovereign rights of Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples.

Thorpe asserts, "Without a treaty Australia doesn't have a foundation for its law. The Treaty should underpin the Constitution, rather than having the Aboriginal People slotted into the Constitution 100 years later."

Media Contact:

Robbie Thorpe – 0415 801 170