




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Path to Treaty

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.53 am): Today we make history. Today in a few hours time on the Speaker's Green the Premier will launch the Queensland government response to the Treaty Advancement Committee report. This moment has been more than 200 years of post-colonial contact and a millennia before that in the making. This moment is also a testament to the courage and compassion of our Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk. She had the strength and conviction to take such a perplexing and polarising aspect of our history out of the too-hard basket and put it at the top of her priority list. As the Premier says, every generation is given an opportunity to make its mark. This is ours. I am honoured and humbled to proclaim that we are committed to treaty-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Queensland will be forever transformed by the significant reforms that lead to a treaty or treaties with First Nations peoples because this is the right thing to do.

The Treaty Advancement Committee in its report has made recommendations that will lay a strong foundation for truth-telling and treaty-making, and we have already started. It is a unique process to Queensland and we are very proud of it. One of the messages heard loud and clear was that for treaty to succeed non-Indigenous Queenslanders need to come on the journey. I believe any Queenslanders who believes in the sense of a fair go will accept that we have unfinished business with First Nations people in this state. Central to achieving this is understanding there can be no treaty without the truth. It is vital that we continue to ensure First Nations peoples as well as the broader Queensland community are centrally engaged in these next steps.

Treaty is a journey. The path ahead will not be easy. We cannot let the uncomfortable truths of our past prevent us from building a better future. This is a journey that will benefit all Queenslanders. By taking this giant leap forward today on this journey we look forward to a future where we can understand and acknowledge the past and embrace and celebrate together the rich and vibrant cultures of our First Nations peoples. As we take this next step on our journey, I note that by no means do we take it alone. The momentum at a national level for voice, treaty and truth grows with every passing day.

Today it is with great interest that we look to our counterparts in the Victorian parliament as they debate the treaty authority bill that will establish an independent umpire to oversee treaty negotiations. Their legislation has been shaped and driven by the First People's Assembly of Victoria, the democratically elected voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in that state. I met with Victoria's First People's Assembly just a few weeks ago. It is exciting to see the first piece of permanent treaty-making architecture in that state which will soon be followed by a self-determination fund and the Treaty Negotiation Framework that will enable traditional owners to negotiate with that state. This is an important day for both of our states today—Victoria and Queensland—as we walk our collective paths to treaty together.