



10 JUNE 2011

FIRST CONGRESS MEETING - BEACON FOR FUTURE

Joint Statement by Congress Co-Chairs Josephine Bourne and Sam Jeffries

This inaugural National Congress meeting has been everything that we hoped it would be – powerful and emotive, diverse people and views and ultimately historic for our peoples' self-determination.

As Co-Chairs we called for a culture of robust discussion and fierce conversation while respecting each other's views. And we're pleased to say that we have seen that culture in action these past few days.

Over the past three days Delegates, the Board and Speakers talked in depth about the policy areas that impact on First Nations peoples, current issues like constitutional reform and the best ways for the Congress to engage with Members.

Our task now is to reflect on what has happened over these past three days and draw it all together.

The challenges for Delegates, the newly elected National Board of Directors and every Congress Member include:

- Building on our already positive membership base to harness the untapped potential of our communities and peoples
- Engaging with our members to draw out their best ideas and opinions
- Articulating a clear policy platform to engage with Governments and hold them accountable
- Securing our financial future.

The Congress will need to support our first elected National Board while holding them accountable.

We all have confidence that the Congress is capable of great things and now is the time for us to rise up to the challenge of making that a reality to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People across Australia.

A summary and report of the first meeting will be used by the new Board to chart their priorities for the year ahead.

media@nationalcongress.com.au