



08 July 2011

**NEW ERA FOR FIRST PEOPLES
– ELECTED REPS FOCUS ON WORK AHEAD**

The first elected board of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples took office today and held their first official meeting at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence in Sydney.

New Co-Chairs Jody Broun and Les Malezer said it was very powerful that they took office on the annual national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day (NAIDOC) – July 8th.

The eight Directors were recently elected by Members and Delegates of the new national body and the meeting follows the first policy summit held last month at Homebush.

“We are all very humbled and energised at the same time, about our role and the work ahead,” said Ms Broun.

“The new board has hit the ground running, as we continue to canvass our members and adopt positions on a range of issues that they have identified,” she said.

Mr Malezer said the Co-Chairs and Directors are committed to some key principles and priorities.

“Governments are on notice that the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be protected and promoted,” said Malezer.

“We are also focused on growing the Congress and fulfilling our potential as a new voice in the nation's political landscape,” he said.

The National Board identified critical areas of the work ahead:

- Our top priority is our people: building on our existing membership base
- Ensuring any constitutional reform accords with the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Ensuring that our peoples and communities voice is heard during consultations on the Northern Territory Emergency Response
- And further to that, the Congress establishes a formal position on the future of Federal Government policies and investment under this program in the Northern Territory
- Publishing the final report of the National Congress meeting
- Publishing the membership survey on policy priorities

ENDS

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Jody Broun(Co-Chair), Brian Butler, Venessa Curnow, Dennis Egginton, Rod Little, Les Malezer (Co-Chair), Tammy Solonec and Daphne Yarram.

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