



COVENANTING: DRAFT DOCUMENT for RECONCILIATION

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE, UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
Resolution 99.114

The Assembly resolved to:

- 99.114 noting that during 1999 Australian people have been invited to consult and discuss widely a draft Document for Reconciliation and to develop strategies to advance reconciliation:
- 99.114.01 express solidarity with the UAICC National Committee in their response to the draft document for reconciliation and adopt it as the Uniting Church's national response;
- 99.114.02 (a) commit the church to take further action within the areas of economic independence, disadvantage, rights and reconciliation;
- (b) welcome the UAICC proposals for action in these areas namely:
- ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE**
- assist the process of cross-cultural awareness of non-Indigenous people and Indigenous people which outlines the similarities and differences, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous economic and political systems and concepts
 - encourage UCA members to make themselves available for Indigenous people who want to start and maintain their business
 - encourage Synods' accountancy and finance services to make themselves available to assist Indigenous people in financial management skills training and business development
 - provide mentoring and other assistance to Indigenous people wishing to establish businesses
 - design and implement a 2% Indigenous employment strategy for UCA Synods, the Assembly and schools, hospitals and agencies. This would require mentoring within the workplace and creating culturally sensitive workplaces
 - advocate for cultural awareness training for workplaces
 - create and finance a national wide strategy to encourage community development trained mission co-workers to support the UAICC's ministry
- DISADVANTAGE**
- encourage UCA hospitals to develop Indigenous health policies
 - provide hospitality for Indigenous families visiting sick relations in hospitals

- provide cultural awareness training for health workers, particularly in regions where they will be servicing Indigenous people
- encourage UCA schools to develop Indigenous education policies
- encourage the employment of Indigenous Liaison Workers in UCA agencies
- encourage partnership programs between UCA schools and other schools who teach Indigenous students
- advocate for regional investigations into Indigenous educational service delivery
- increase advocacy in the areas of housing, law and the justice system

RIGHTS

- continue the UCA's advocacy role in promoting social justice and Indigenous rights
- encourage the Commonwealth Government to –
 - provide constitutional recognition of Indigenous rights and removing aspects of the constitution which can be used to discriminate on the basis of race
 - provide constitutional protection to the Racial Discrimination Act
 - provide for Indigenous representation in the parliament
 - affirm and recognise native title, land rights, customary law and indigenous heritage protection

RECONCILIATION

- require of theological colleges that cultural awareness training be a requirement of theological training and elders preparation
 - make ongoing Covenanting commitments at the National, Synod, Presbytery and Congregational levels – which will include Covenanting Statements, use of Indigenous protocols and symbols, recognition of country through statements and plaques
 - encourage more youth exposure programs
 - work with the UAICC towards developing an Indigenous theology
- (c) request National Covenanting to consult with the UAICC and appropriate agencies in Synods and Assembly to develop further the proposals for action by the church;
- (d) request National Covenanting to bring firm proposals for action on these matters to the Ninth Assembly;

99.114.03 urge the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation to establish a process for negotiation between Indigenous leaders and the Federal Government concerning

- the co-existence of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous systems of land ownership;
- constitutional acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples and protection of Indigenous rights;

99.114.04 welcome the initiatives of Synods in addressing covenanting and reconciliation and request all Synods to establish an adequately resourced Covenanting Committee with Covenanting Coordinator.