

First Nations Portfolio



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**ADVANCING THE AUSTRALIAN NATION'S
RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. A WAY
FORWARD.**

**2025 EDDIE KOIKI MABO LECTURE – JAMES COOK
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Presented by
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Advancing the Australian Nation's Relationship With Indigenous Peoples. A way forward.

2025 Eddie Koiki Mabo Lecture – James Cook University

INTRO

In contemplating our relationship as First Peoples with the settler state, it is clear to me that achieving more equitable arrangements, and advancing our rights and interests, depend on two key things.

The first is reshaping our economic relationship with governments and the wider economy through organised advocacy, public policy and institutional reform, so as to provide a basis for our long-term resilience and prosperity.

The second is prosecuting further legal challenges in the courts.

I will speak to the first point later in this address. But first, given the historical significance of this place, and of the struggles for native title fought in Queensland, I want to touch on the importance of strategic action in the courts.

Other than the 1967 referendum (as limited as it was), and a few statutory efforts, our struggle for legal recognition of our inherent rights and interests has largely been advanced through the courts.

The first Mabo decision in 1988 against the state of Queensland laid the foundations for the 1992 decision that fundamentally changed the relationship between us as First Peoples and the settler state.

The decision recognised antecedent rights to our territories and dismantled the fiction of *terra nullius* that underpinned the Crown's baseless claim of sovereignty over our lands and waters.

This, still today, remains an unresolved legal question that becomes more glaring as time goes on. The legitimacy of the Australian state, I think, depends on addressing this issue.

The *Wik* decision in 1996, the *Akiba* decision in 2013, *Timber Creek* decision in 2019 which established critical principles of compensation for the extinguishment and impairment of native title, the *Love and Thoms* decision in 2021, and of

course, earlier this year, the High Court recognition in the *Yunupingu Case* that our native title rights and interests are subject to constitutional property protections afforded to all other Australians.

These decisions have all helped to shape a path to a more respectful relationship with the settler state.

This is a story generally shared by our friends in Canada, although they have more to show for their efforts.

Several of my Canadian colleagues are fond of saying to their government counterparts that they are sick of winning so many court cases, and they need to save money to settle by agreements!

It must be a priority for us as First Peoples to use these important decisions as platforms to give greater shape to our legal relationship with Australia. They remind us that, like our friends in Canada, strategic, persistent and organised action in the courts is fundamental to advancing our interests.

It can help to provide better foundations that can become cornerstones for the just recognition of our pre-existing and continuing rights and interests – empowering our ability to exercise our customary rights and entitlements equitably in modern Australia without the threat or expectation of assimilation.

This pillar of continued action in the courts must be married with organised advocacy for public policy reform to shift the conversation from one of deficit and poverty, where we are seen as mendicants, to one of Indigenous strength and prosperity, where we are valued partners in an evolving Australian economy.

PART I

The defeat of the recent Voice referendum has left a vacuum in public discourse and a deflation of government policy ambition about the position of Indigenous people in the Australian nation.

The Closing the Gap framework, in its different forms, has underpinned Australian policy direction on Indigenous affairs for the past eighteen years, but it continues to fail to achieve its intended targets and outcomes.

This failure is rightfully the focus of much criticism, highlighted by the Productivity Commission's annual review of the performance and assessment of the identified targets.

Eighteen years after Prime Minister Rudd launched the Closing the Gap framework, Prime Ministers are still standing up in Parliament each February to deliver the same sad results.

Well might we ask, how many more years do we have to endure pronouncements about this continuing embarrassment of public policy failure?

Only last month, Dr Eddie Cubillo, a respected Larrakia leader and law professor, resigned in despair as an expert member of the national Justice Policy Partnership.

The Partnership's aim is to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal adults and children in the criminal justice system.

In his email to colleagues, Dr Cubillo said the justice elements of the Closing the Gap framework had failed.

He said he could no longer be part of a process that had become a vehicle for delay, not justice, and merely gave an illusion of progress while harm continued unabated.

For proof of this view, we need look no further than this state of Queensland, or over the border in the Northern Territory. We are confronted by catastrophic failures, and indifference of governments about the impacts of their determination to dehumanise and punish young people who've done wrong.

Children as young as ten are being locked up in police watchhouses, or isolated in detention centres and are being deprived of education or rehabilitation opportunities.

Despite all the evidence, and the critical harm to our young people and our communities, these inhumane policies endure.

Never mind the damage to Australia's international reputation.

The justice targets are not the only failures of the Closing the Gap framework, but they serve an important example. And yet, despite the many failures, significant investment is still desperately required to address and redress the ongoing, unacceptable and unjust circumstances that beset our communities.

Hopefully, tonight I might be able to share some pointers that I think are worth exploring.

An important recent development has been the delivery of the Yoorrook Justice Commission's final report in Victoria.

The outcome of a nationally significant truth-telling process, the report highlights critical issues at the core of the historical relationship between settlers and First Peoples.

Initially we saw bipartisan support at the beginning of the Yoorrook process.

But, as with treaty processes in the Northern Territory and Queensland, post-referendum, the battle lines of Howard-era politics appear to have been redrawn.

Conservative governments have walked away from substantive commitments to reconciliation and a fairer relationship.

Many Labor governments have been stiff and unconvincing in their action and leadership to advance important commitments to Indigenous communities.

Against the hope that bloomed from the Uluru Statement and early commitments to its implementation, the situation nationally now feels sadly familiar – a nation locked into a practised method of inaction.

Small vision. Safe bureaucracy buffering change. Our people of secondary concern.

Despite this, the developments in Victoria are cause for optimism.

State-wide treaty negotiations are underway, and Premier Allan has committed to legislate to ensure the ongoing role of the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria.

This should give us some hope that the wheels, while turning slowly, are being greased by innovative, constructive initiatives.

But, concurrent with the advances in Victoria, we've been hit with the day-to-day realities that confront Indigenous peoples and us as a nation.

Just this past week we have seen a racist and violent attack by white supremacists in Melbourne on the Aboriginal Sovereignty camp in Kings Domain.

In Western Australia we learnt that a police officer dismissed an Aboriginal person's threat of suicide and then laughed about his death in custody. This after the murder of the young and innocent Cassius Turvey and the death in custody of 16-year-old Clayton Dodd in an adult cell in Casuarina Prison in Perth.

I wonder why we continue to be incapable of displaying the humanity required to address these tragedies.

Australia has such a long way to go when it comes to our relationship with government and the broader community.

I agree with Noel Pearson when he said during the referendum debate that we are the most disliked people in the country.

And yet I know there are good people out there who want to see Australia confront its past and embrace a fairer, fuller relationship with its First Peoples.

As always, we need to appeal to and work with these people and nurture support for these sentiments.

The truth is the same as it has been throughout my life – that despite the fiduciary obligation, the duty of care owed to us as Indigenous peoples, at the end of the day the decisive factor in our struggle will not be government or the wider community.

It will be us.

It will be about how we organise ourselves and assert a direction for our communities that looks beyond the lame expectations about our futures, and the limiting political framework and mindset that maintain our disempowerment.

We need to ask ourselves, what is it we need to do to build our own capability so that we can manage and own the risks ourselves, against some incredible odds?

PART II

We are at an interesting juncture in history, challenged by ongoing global geopolitical events that suggest the only certainty today is uncertainty.

The wars, war crimes and genocide being perpetrated against the Palestinian people in Gaza; disruptiveness of AI and associated new technology that further fuels globalisation; the rise of dangerous conservative ideology and autocratic leaders who challenge and undermine the central tenets of democracy and the rule of law.

These phenomena are occurring amidst catastrophic weather events caused by human induced climate change which devastate our precious natural environments, major infrastructure and critical services.

Australia has not been spared these uncertainties and the challenge of their impact on us and our economy.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers has said that global volatility and unpredictability will shape and constrain the government's choices in this term.

So, where do we sit in this context and what does this all mean for the Indigenous community?

We are very much on the frontline in experiencing real impacts caused by global uncertainty.

Our communities still struggle to access critical services and develop infrastructure needed to support basic human conditions.

As highlighted *ad nauseum*, the failure to address past wrongs and intergenerational trauma and other complex, challenging factors, has meant that our people continue to be the most incarcerated on the planet.

Uncertainty compounds our isolation from secure resources and imperils any secure future for our young people.

That's in spite of our careful custodianship of our lands, once abundant in natural resources that sustained our own vibrant economies.

So, we feel acutely the uncertainty the Treasurer speaks of.

At the same time, we must recognise there are critical opportunities for us and our communities.

Positioning our comparative advantages to align with opportunities created by emerging economic conditions, and the economic and fiscal policy direction of government, must be a priority.

It should give us hope.

In response to the many causes of uncertainty – to the growing climate crisis and ongoing geopolitical tensions – we can position ourselves as key actors and valued partners in a new Australian economy dependent on the wealth of natural resources of our countries, and in need of our deep knowledge of, and care for, the natural world.

Reshaping our economic relationship with governments and the wider economy must be a focus of organised advocacy, policy innovation and institutional reform.

It provides the greatest opportunity to elevate our comparative advantages and realise improved prosperity and independence for our communities.

Compared with when I was a young person, we are making great strides in improving economic opportunities for our people.

Professor Michelle's Evans's research through her Dilin Duwa unit at Melbourne Uni, and the recent snapshot of the growth of Indigenous business and our

contribution to the national GDP, highlight the growing contribution of Indigenous enterprise to the Australian economy.

Sitting alongside this is the significant asset-bases we have accumulated in the past 60-odd years, post land rights and native title.

Indigenous Australians now have a recognised legal interest in almost 60 per cent of the Australian land mass.

In Northern Australia, that's closer to 80 per cent.

Notwithstanding various limitations on these interests, and the complexity in navigating the processes to activate these assets to our advantage, they present significant, unrealised economic opportunities for our communities, and for the wider Australian economy.

The economic realities Australia will face in the coming decades mean there will be greater dependence on critical minerals and natural resources to drive a clean energy transition.

The vast majority of critical minerals are on our lands.

We must put our collective efforts into reshaping the regimes restricting our economic agency so we can drive our own economic prosperity and contribute to a more sustainable national economy.

The economic story of Indigenous Australia is not given sufficient focus.

We sustained for thousands of years our own economies built on the rich natural resources of our lands and trading systems that stretched across the continent and to adjacent islands.

These pre-colonial economies – the first Australian economies – were critically and systematically undermined by the systems of commerce and industry brought by those who invaded our lands.

Despite this, our resilience and innovation are clear today. We are not just important cultural and political actors, we are important economic actors, with critical economic rights and interests.

As Djawa Yunupingu said “we are economic beings”.

Embracing this means Australia must confront challenging truths about our shared history and embrace opportunities for change that support our strengths as Indigenous peoples.

Understanding the scale of dispossession and the systematic marginalisation of our peoples from economic and political power throughout colonisation is important to this challenge.

The *Mabo* decision and others since have helped to advance our position and have helped to pull apart entrenched myths and legal lies that have supported our economic marginalisation.

These go back to western legal history and are important. They include the Doctrine of Discovery from the 15th Century and the doctrine of Backward Peoples, also known as the “Doctrine of Civilisation”.

I’m not a lawyer and I don’t intend to go into the details, only to say the rejection of ‘*terra nullius*’ by the High Court in ‘92 challenged and overturned the silly notion that somehow our ancestors had conveniently decided to vacate the continent while the Brits snuck in the back yard for a BBQ and a game of cricket whilst planting the flag!

How exactly the Crown did acquire its sovereignty over our traditional lands and resources is a matter still unresolved in Australia.

These settler legal ideas enabled the empire to build an economy on our dispossession, and on our economic marginalisation as indentured labour.

The High Court in *Mabo* acknowledged this – Justice Brennan saying that Indigenous people had been *dispossessed of their land parcel by parcel, to make way for expanding colonial settlement*.

Our dispossession “*underwrote the development of the nation,*” he said.

Our long struggle for land rights recognition has confronted this history and has delivered critical statutory land rights protections in the Northern Territory, South Australia, and New South Wales.

Native title has given some of us a footing to claim back through the settler law formal rights over our traditional territories.

But it must be acknowledged that these regimes were not designed as a route to economic empowerment. They are not optimal arrangements for us as Indigenous peoples.

Restrictions on land fungibility and institutional limitations to accessing capital, as well as uneven bargaining arrangements related to the use of our lands, have meant we have been limited in our capacity to drive economic opportunities for our communities.

A key part of shaping a new, more equitable relationship with the Australian state must be designing and implementing public policy solutions that protect our hard-won communal rights but enable us flexibility to pursue economic opportunities.

This means considering statutory land title reform that can overcome limitations of fungibility and provide greater certainty to the wider market, reducing transaction costs and empowering us to generate better returns, to negotiate better deals about matters over our traditional lands.

Governments have been hopelessly unsophisticated in considering what we want to do in this space and in working with us to explore the expression of our economic self-determination.

Conservatives have typically approached questions of land title reform through an assimilationist economics lens which calls for full alienability of our interests akin to mainstream non-Indigenous property considerations.

This approach is misguided and dangerous – we are not talking about giving up our hard-won rights.

We are asking for government to work with us find the best solutions.

The approach of Labor governments has at times been equally unhelpful – preferring to do little and maintaining our economic powerlessness.

We must be organised and lead a more sophisticated discussion about our economic rights – including those to land and water – where we are empowered to protect our underlying interests and pursue economic activities according to our own aspirations and priorities.

Government has a key role to play in setting conditions that enable more optimal economic and fiscal arrangements. These arrangements can play a significant role in closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage by building Indigenous prosperity.

Mechanisms being implemented in Canada provide some helpful examples.

Regimes established under the *Land Management Act* and the *Fiscal Management Act*, as well as loan guarantee, affordable finance and beneficial

long-term leasing arrangements that protect underlying Indigenous title are providing platforms for greater economic agency for Indigenous nations.

I understand there are key constitutional and legal differences between Canada and Australia, but our governments have a lot of power to work with us to implement similarly innovative policy solutions that support us as economic actors to achieve greater agency and independence.

Despite the uncertainty we face and our ongoing marginalisation, we must see ourselves as being capable of being part of the solution to drive improved well-being in our communities, to build rich and sustainable local economies, and to contribute important national productivity and economic benefit.

This is possible if we are prepared to own the risk ourselves and if governments are prepared to work with us in collaboration.

These efforts, coupled with litigation and advocacy to advance our inherent rights and interests, can help to frame fairer terms in our relationship with the Australian state.

PART III

A key question for me after the referendum, and I'm sure for many others at the time, was what happens the day afterwards - win or lose?

While constitutional recognition and formal agreement with government on the nature of our shared history are foundational matters that must be addressed, would a *Yes* outcome have made a material difference in shifting our current inequities and our ongoing economic marginalisation?

A key historical failure of Indigenous policy we have to acknowledge is the execution and implementation of good ideas.

This is the same now as it would have been if the referendum had been successful. We must acknowledge and confront the issue directly with governments.

Over the 40-plus years of my working life, the dominating impact of bureaucracy has been a barrier to progress.

It has at almost every turn reinforced our dependence on slow-moving, incremental and poorly implemented government programs.

However well-meaning some efforts have been, they have generally constrained our ability improve the economic dynamics that impact Indigenous communities and our relationships with government and the wider economy.

Our capacity to build local economies and generate independent source revenue and guaranteed income – key factors in building our capability and expressing our self-determination – have been constantly restricted.

The convoluted nature of our federation compounds these impacts at the regional and national level.

We give lip service to self-determination – so often used as a political catchcry to present the illusion of progress – but it does have a real meaning.

That meaning is about us as Indigenous peoples taking control of our destinies.

To our great national shame, despite the fact it is the only policy setting that has shown sustained evidence of supporting improved Indigenous life outcomes, self-determination has rarely been supported meaningfully by Australian governments.

And that's in spite of the fact that it is the backbone of the preeminent instrument of international law related to Indigenous peoples – the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – which the Australian Government has endorsed.

Part of any effective policy framework must involve working with us in design and implementation to support our self-determination.

The risk of pursuing a business-as-usual approach is that the current policy void will be filled with reactionary, punitive and assimilationist approaches to Indigenous policy.

The evidence for this has been shown in the recent Northern Territory and Queensland elections.

What is needed is a logical and pragmatic approach for the Australian nation's relationship with Indigenous peoples.

As I have discussed, this should be supported by ongoing efforts to advance our rights and interests through the courts and must include critical economic and fiscal levers that enable us as equity partners to contribute to and share in the benefits of Australia's economic prosperity.

It must also address the failure of bureaucratic control over Indigenous communities.

To realise this, the Commonwealth Government must re-assert its national leadership and use the full extent of its constitutional powers to direct and coordinate effective Indigenous affairs policies.

This must be done with us, not to us.

Such an approach depends on genuine efforts to build a relationship with Indigenous peoples that is based on *trust*.

There is no and has never been a defined trust relationship between the Indigenous community and governments.

This can only be achieved by reaching an agreed framework that defines our socio-cultural, economic and political relationship, providing a rights and rules-based approach to how we should properly and respectfully relate to each other. What's happening in Victoria is informative.

A fundamental goal of governments must be to partner and build improved confidence with Indigenous peoples and enable us to take control of our destinies and to own our own risk.

I am not advocating wholesale abandonment of the Closing the Gap framework – as I have said, significant effort and investment to address disadvantage is critical – but a serious reassessment of government's relationship with our communities is called for.

We need to imagine a new way of doing business to demonstrate, better define and exercise *trust*.

PART IV

My suggested proposal incorporates two broad elements, noting that we have not had any major Indigenous policy reform since the Keating Government's three-pronged response to the 1992 *Mabo* decision: the Native Title Act, the (then) Indigenous Land Fund and Commission, and the proposed Social Justice Package, which was torn up by the Howard government in 1996.

The direction that I envisage is predicated on a rights-based and partnered change to public policy and reform, beyond the normal programmatic approach that's delivered only a limited return from significant public outlays and that continues to deny any real outcomes for our people and the country.

As I stated earlier, the Commonwealth has to assert its constitutional authority to make the right laws for all of us, and work through the processes of national cabinet to achieve a progressive accord.

This must address systemic obstacles and barriers in the relationship and delivery mechanisms with state and territory jurisdictions and truly empower Aboriginal controlled agencies on the ground. Regional strengths must be elevated, but national coordination and leadership is critical.

Building capability and competency in our organisations to meet the challenge must be a focus.

In my view, there are two areas to focus on as a priority:

- Firstly, a comprehensive national Indigenous economic empowerment policy framework, something the Prime Minister has committed to.
- Secondly, Commonwealth responsibility for settling historic grievances, native title compensation and for building a new relationship between the Australian Nation and its First Peoples – one that is based on trust and guided by UNDRIP.

These ideas are not radical.

They are politically achievable, given the results of the last election, and they have the potential to garner broad community support.

Indigenous Economic Empowerment Policy Framework

Prime Minister Albanese acknowledged at last year's Garma Festival that Australia has never pursued a comprehensive economic empowerment policy agenda for Indigenous people. He committed his government to this undertaking.

This year at Garma he elaborated that a new First Nations Economic Partnership agreement between the First Nations Economic Empowerment Alliance, the Commonwealth, and the Coalition of Peaks would advance this important commitment.

The government's commitment to pursuing comprehensive economic reform has been directly informed by the advocacy of the Alliance (which is a national association of key Indigenous led organisations and experts committed to advancing the economic rights and interests of Indigenous Australians), and the ANU First Nations Portfolio's Murru waaruu dialogue process. The Murru waaruu

process focused on creating sustainable wealth for Indigenous benefit from the extensive assets that Indigenous people own, particularly land.

That process identified various priorities for policy and institutional reform that need to be undertaken on a national scale through a coordinated economic policy framework. These priorities include: mobilising public and private capital to grow indigenous economies, supporting the leveraging of Indigenous assets and interests, modernising agreement making and institutions, and building Indigenous capacity.

The potential for a collaboration of government, Indigenous leaders and industry to develop and implement this agenda is achievable through the Economic Partnership. It offers an important platform to realise, for the first time in Australian history, an effective national economic and fiscal policy framework that supports the development of our economic interests for greater independence and prosperity.

Many of the lessons and insights we have gained at the ANU First Nations Portfolio and the Alliance have come about through listening, sharing and working

with Indigenous brothers and sisters in Canada, who are some 30 years advanced in this space.

While there is great diversity among our own First Nations, we do share with Canadian nations some political and legal familiarities and the experience of economic marginalisation that ensued from colonisation.

In 2023 the ANU First Nations Portfolio, with our Alliance colleagues, signed an MOU with the several agencies established under the *2005 Canadian Fiscal Management Act* which has the purpose of assisting First Nations communities and corporations to operate outside of the *Indian Act* to pursue their self-determination through economic and fiscal independence.

Like our friends in Canada, we must advance more sophisticated arrangements in Australia. Economic empowerment is one of the crucial missing pieces in the puzzle.

By generating our own enterprises, revenue, and wealth we can build a culture of independence and self-determination our communities have always called for to

protect our languages, culture, land, waters and customs.

Part of this focus means considering institutional and legislative limitations that restrict our ability to engage with the economy.

The Prime Minister at Garma referred to several reforms to address this; one was how the current Special Investment Vehicles (SIV's) (of which there eight (8) responsible for around \$100 billion +) might better support investment opportunities through their investment mandates - providing greater opportunities for Indigenous investment and equity in infrastructure and services initiatives.

The SIV's are Commonwealth entities established to finance additional investment in the economy across various policy areas. These include housing, clean energy and climate, agriculture, and critical minerals and resources.

Optimising the SIVs and other public financing mechanisms, as well as considering institutional limitations, including necessary legislative reform to support capacity

building, access to capital and for us to leverage our various assets, has been a focus of Alliance advocacy and is a priority of the Economic Partnership.

True change requires the ability to invest in our own solutions, away from bureaucracy and in partnership with the mainstream economy. This is what we need to work towards.

Reframing Reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and the Australian Nation

The Australian Government should lead a national reconciliation effort that addresses historical grievances. This would involve broader recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples as part of a national trust-building strategy.

This national approach would be informed by effective efforts of agreement and treaty making and truth telling from the states and territories. It should be underpinned by a commitment to UNDRIP as an instrument of reconciliation.

UNDRIP is a critical and underused public policy tool that can provide a roadmap to a relationship that is based on mutual *trust*. Realising such a relationship

requires government to acknowledge and provide space for the expression of our inherent rights and to make concerted effort to confront and address historical injustices and unfinished business.

Only with national leadership and coordination will there be consistent progress towards building mutual trust and respect.

Canada's experience with Crown-First Nations relationships provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of a nationally coordinated strategy.

Through formal processes for engagement, negotiation and cooperation, the Canadian government has sought to facilitate reconciliation and recognise the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples. A key underpinning of this approach has been a federal commitment to UNDRIP as a framework for reconciliation.

In the Australian context, a similar commitment to reconciliation and trust building should be advanced through an office within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to be a focal point of national leadership and responsibility.

We don't need to spend millions of dollars on another Royal Commission or further reviews.

The recommendations from reports in the early mid-nineties are still important platforms for progress and should be a key reference point for government taking action to build trust.

Most have never been properly responded to nor acted on.

A revitalised review of recommendations from the Black Deaths in Custody and Bringing Them Home reports still offer fertile ideas for change.

So too does the report of the national Reconciliation Council.

Even recommendations from the work of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission are worth revisiting.

Importantly, guided by UNDRIP, a new Office should partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to consider the post referendum agenda for addressing truth telling and treaty.

Governments have yet to properly address outstanding and critical matters like proper compensation and respect for our stolen generations (notwithstanding the apology), the scandalous levels of incarceration and recidivism, and the tragic incidence of suicide, especially among our young people.

They continue to drag their feet on these questions. They do so knowing they will soon have to account for the outstanding compensation – which, with interest is growing daily – owed to First Nations peoples for the extinguishment and impairment of our native title rights and interests.

Following the *Timber Creek* and *Yunupingu* decisions there is now a clearly established legal avenue to pursue compensation against the states, territories, and the Commonwealth.

These debts will inevitably come due, and governments will be fronting bills of possibly hundreds of billions of dollars – potentially more. As we continue to pursue action in the courts, questions of legal liability may be further expanded, so this situation is a critical one for government.

It is an opportunity for government to work with us to reach mutually beneficial outcomes.

Following the last election the Albanese government has the political capital and a runway to address change boldly.

The landslide victory presents a licence for the government to pursue goals beyond narrow political interests.

It was a clear signal for critical reform. As with proud Labor governments of the past, we are hopeful this government will take up that challenge.

And there are no more important reforms than those matters that I have spoken about tonight.

At stake is our shared history and future.

Galiya