



## TIME FOR TREATIES

Public Forum

“Men speak out for Treaty”

Monday, 14 March 2016  
Redfern Community Centre

### SPEAKERS:

**YINGIYA MARK GUYULA**, Djambarrpuyngu Nation, Yolngu Nations Assembly Spokesperson

**TERRY MASON**, Awabakal Man, Chair of NTEU Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Policy Committee

**TONY McAVOY SC**, Wiri Man, Barrister

**TAUTO SANSBURY**, Narungga Elder and Aboriginal Advocate

**CHRIS SARRA**, Gurang Gurang, Founding Chairman, Stronger Smarter Institute

**Facilitator: Jeff McMullen**, Journalist and Film-maker

### YINGIYA MARK GUYULA

(Näkarrma Djuwarr'miny),  
Djambarrpuyngu Nation, Yolngu Nations Assembly  
Spokesperson



“We want treaty. We want a partnership. We want a dialogue in decision-making. We want diplomatic talks with the government - the Yolngu government and the Balanda [non-Indigenous] government.”

Yingiya is an Indigenous man from the Yolngu people group, Djambarrpuyngu nation and the Liya- dhalinymirr tribe. He is an Indigenous language interpreter and experienced cross-cultural educator, recently working with Charles Darwin University as a senior lecturer in Yolngu studies. Yingiya is also a highly skilled social organiser and unifier demonstrated in his more recent position as an East Arnhem Support Worker with the Northern Regional Council of Congress (the Indigenous presbytery of the Uniting Church Northern Synod) and in his role as a Yolngu Nations Assembly spokesperson. Yingiya first trained in aircraft maintenance and was the first Yolngu person to get his pilot licence.

Yingiya has the title of Djirrikaymirr-judge amongst his people. This makes him an authority of the Yolngu traditional system of law, called Maḏayin. His tribe is also one of a number of groups responsible for oversight of the Indigenous central governance institution of Njārra' (a sort of parliament). This is where Yingiya's passion lies. Maḏayin law and the Njārra' institution has maintained peace, justice, and

harmony in Arnhem Land for millennia, yet today ongoing colonialism is overriding and destabilising Yolngu society. There are bright spots of personal relationship but everyday the gap grows between Yingiya's people and Australia.

Without a treaty to join the two peoples together, we can't truly work together nor can we build each other up!

<http://www.yingiya.net/english.html>

“When the Macassans first arrived on the north coast of Arnhem land they straight away saw human beings living there... [people] here practicing their own governance... the Macassans came and made negotiations to work together ... when the first fleet came they looked at people as flora and fauna ... they ignored our culture... and the system of governance already here ... that is why we say give us our power back.”

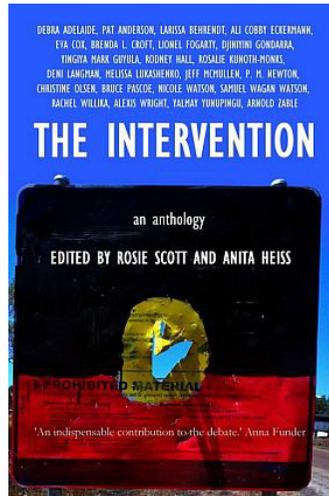
<http://stoptheintervention.org/facts/press-releases/sydney-public-forum-on-the-need-for-treaty-10-3-16>

Wāwa ga yapa it's time to stand up and call for our freedom. The Australian Government will not accept our law unless we as Yolngu get together and shout "TREATY NOW". Then our friends and fellow Australians, and the rest of the world will hear our "cry for freedom" and will join with us in the shout for TREATY. We as Yolngu need to make that decision first, and must do it now. As a spokesperson for the Yolngu Nations Assembly I urge all leaders of other Yolngu organizations to stand with us and call for diplomatic talks with the Australian Government, because that thing called "CLOSING THE GAP" is getting wider and wider, and what they are doing is against our will.

<https://www.facebook.com/yingiya.guyula>

Yingiya Mark Guyula is one of the contributors to the important book

### “The Intervention: an Anthology”



In this historic anthology, award-winning Australian writers Rosie Scott and Dr. Anita Heiss have gathered together the work of twenty of Australia's finest writers ... to bring a new dimension and urgency to an issue that has remained largely outside the public radar. In compelling fiction, memoir, essays, poetry and communiqués, the dramatic story of the Intervention and the despair, anguish and anger of the First Nations People of the Territory comes alive.

#### Further info about “The Intervention: an Anthology”:

[www.concernedaustralians.com.au](http://www.concernedaustralians.com.au)

and

<http://www.respectandlisten.org/nt-intervention/intervention-anthology.html>

### TERRY MASON

Awabakal Man

Chair of NTEU Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Policy Committee



“A little bit of history today. The first time in about 20 years the Victorian Government held a large consultation with Aboriginal People.”

Terry Mason is from the land of the Awabakal language group and works writing curriculum for the Institute of Koorie Education at Deakin University. He previously worked in the Badanami Centre, University Western Sydney in the area of access and learning support. Former Academic Co-ordinator of the BEd. Aboriginal Rural Education Program, currently chair of NTEU Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Policy Committee and former chair of the Board of the Welfare Rights Centre. Terry was a reader of written submissions to the “2004 NSW Review of Aboriginal Education”, a key researcher in the “Successful transition programs from prior-to-school to school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children” project, contributing to Australian and overseas publications and has presented papers in the area of transition, starting school and student support. Prior to this he has been closely involved in NSW with Koori community, social and work issues through active involvement with Community Groups, welfare organisations, Commonwealth and State Public Service entities and union representation at member and executive level.

At the meeting with the Victorian Government the motion ‘*We as Sovereign People reject Constitutional*

*Recognition*’ was passed with unanimous support.

Two other motions were also passed:

- We demand the state resources a treaty process, including a framework for treaties, with complete collaboration with all Sovereign Peoples and Nations, and treaties are finalised and agreed upon by December 2016.
- Resource an Elders Council of South Eastern Australia, which is comprised of all Sovereign Peoples.

“One of the key comments was ‘Why are we discussing self determination and constitutional recognition without having first sorted out the issue of treaties.’”

<https://newmatilda.com/2016/02/08/recognise-rejected-historic-meeting-500-black-leaders-unanimously-opposes-constitutional-recognition/>

### TONY McAVOY SC

Wiri Man, Barrister



Tony has drafted a Charter for an Assembly of First Nations. The first meeting of the Assembly is due to occur in June 2016 in Darwin prior to the National Native Title Conference. One of the imperatives in establishing an Assembly of First Nations is to have a body that can lobby for

and then negotiate a national framework treaty. “We have an obligation to overcome this major obstacle in our time. We will have failed our children and our grandchildren if they are still having to call for a treaty after we are gone.” He added, “There is a real national need for some reckoning and some closure. The whole notion that Australia was

“settled” relies upon centuries old legal principles to the effect that we Aboriginal people are somehow a lesser form of human than the British. That Australia continues to rely upon those principles is damning and the immorality of it is something that most Australians will be able to appreciate.”

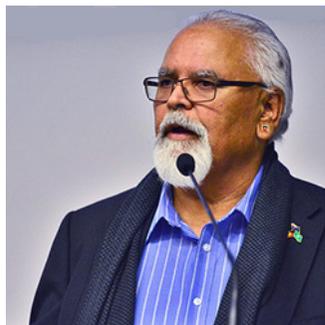
<http://stoptheintervention.org/facts/press-releases/sydney-public-forum-on-the-need-for-treaty-10-3-16>

Tony was admitted as a barrister of the Supreme Court of NSW in January 2000 and appointed as Senior Counsel in September 2015. He has a strong native title practice having appeared for the claimants in numerous successful land claims. He also practices in the areas of administrative law, human rights and discrimination law, coronial inquests and criminal law. He was an Acting Part-Time Commissioner of the NSW Land and Environment Court between 2011 and 2013. Tony was awarded the Inaugural National Indigenous Legal Professional of the Year Award in 2010 by the then Attorney General, the Hon Robert McClelland MP.

<http://www.fjc.net.au/barristers/mcavoy-tony.html>

## TAUTO SANSBURY

Narungga Elder and Aboriginal Advocate



Join the rest of the modern world and talk about Treaty and Sovereignty with Australia's First Peoples.

Shamefully, Australia is the only Commonwealth country that has not negotiated a Treaty with

its traditional owners. This is a sad indictment on this country and has created a real barrier for meaningful change.

A Treaty would empower us, bring pride and outcomes, allow us to make decisions for ourselves and put us in charge of our own destiny.

Closing the Gap is just another set of targets put in place by non Indigenous people, and will eventually be replaced by something else when the reality sets in, in 2018, that it has failed, that the rhetoric never provided a magic bullet to end our disadvantage.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/tauto-sansbury/closing-the-gap-report-was-groundhog-day-for-indigenous-australia\\_b\\_9213424.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=Australia](http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/tauto-sansbury/closing-the-gap-report-was-groundhog-day-for-indigenous-australia_b_9213424.html?utm_hp_ref=Australia)

Tauto has worked in Aboriginal affairs for more than 30 years, in both the private and public sectors. In 2015 Tauto received the National NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2015 Dr Yunupingu Human Rights Award at the National Indigenous Human Rights Awards. He was also a finalist in the Australian of the Year Awards (SA) 2016. He has a breadth of knowledge, expertise and experience in working collaboratively with a wide range of organisations and individuals to achieve effective, culturally appropriate, positive outcomes for Aboriginal people in a wide range of areas. Tauto's passion for justice for Australia's First Nations peoples saw him call the National Freedom Summit in Alice Springs in November 2014, where Aboriginal Elders, leaders and community members gathered to progress work on the serious issues facing the community. The National Freedom Movement was born out of the Summit.

<http://www.garridja.com.au/#/about-tauto/cp60>

## CHRIS SARRA

Gurang Gurang, Founding Chairman, Stronger Smarter Institute.



“A treaty with the First Australians is the ultimate way to acknowledge and honour the humanity of Australia. A treaty sets all Australians free of the Terra Nullius lie that the nation we share now is founded

upon. We are all diminished when the nation we are founded upon is founded on a lie”

Dr Sarra will call on Australians to have the courage to contemplate some form of treaty in a speech at Parliament House on Friday, saying it would acknowledge, embrace and celebrate the humanity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The call reflects a growing push among Indigenous leaders to include discussion of a treaty or compact in debate on constitutional recognition.

"Obviously, matters of constitutional recognition are important, but ultimately what is required is a treaty between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia," Dr Sarra told Fairfax Media.

"Before people get spooked by the ideas of a treaty, you have to understand the essence of what a treaty is. It's a negotiated document between Indigenous Australia and non-Indigenous Australia and neither side signs up until they are satisfied that it says what is needs to say.

"I think it is worth putting a stake in the ground and being committed to that kind of outcome, even if it takes five years or 10 years or 15 years – an outcome

that will finally see the humanity of Aboriginal Australia honoured in the way that it should be."

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/indigenous-push-for-treaty-gathers-momentum-20151112-gkxdvi.html>

In the late 1990s, Dr Chris Sarra became the first Aboriginal principal of Cherbourg State School where he made significant changes to the way that Indigenous students experienced education.

Dr Sarra challenged the whole school community to have high expectations of Indigenous students and fostered the 'strong and smart' approach which embraced a strong and positive sense of what it means to be Aboriginal in contemporary Australian society.

This success led to the formation of the Stronger Smarter Institute (formerly known as the Indigenous Education Leadership Institute) which was established in 2005 as an innovative partnership between Education Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology.

The Institute seeks to achieve scale in delivering the Stronger Smarter approach to as many Indigenous students possible by partnering with, and working through, school and community leaders.

From 2006 to 2012 the Stronger Smarter Leadership Program was developed, from four programs per year, catering to approximately 80 participants, to national and regional programs providing professional development to approximately 250 participants per year.

<http://strongersmarter.com.au/about/history/>

Upcoming event:

**Tuesday, 15 March - 6pm – 7.30pm**

**Trades Hall Auditorium**

Entry via Unions NSW,  
377 Sussex Street, Sydney

**Be part of history in the making ...**



[www.yingiya.net/](http://www.yingiya.net/)

Australia is the **only** Commonwealth Country not to have signed a treaty with its First Nations Peoples.

Chosen by a First Nations political structure, the Yolngu Nations Assembly, Yingiya is running on Treaty in a majority First Nations electorate in Arnhem Land. This is historic, a huge step forward for Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty – and

for our nation as a whole. We all need Treaty. The path to our future passes through the past.

**This is a unique opportunity to hear directly from Yingiya coming all the way from Arnhem Land, NT**

If you wish to donate online to support his campaign, please see:

<https://www.chuffed.org/project/ymgfortreaty>



This Forum is hosted by:

**STICS**

**Stop The Intervention Collective Sydney**

**More info:**

[www.stoptheintervention.org](http://www.stoptheintervention.org)

**Facebook: 'Stop the Intervention Collective Sydney'**



We meet every first and third Monday of the month to discuss the campaign and plan for actions and awareness-raising. 6pm Monday nights, Federation Conference Centre, Level 1, 23-33 Mary Street Surry Hills. Our next meeting will be Monday, 21 March. All welcome

For more information contact: Cathy Gill on 0422385852

**Donate to:**

**Stop the Intervention Collective Sydney**

**BSB number: 06 2212, Account number: 10452725**

**ABN 56 162 064 644**