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National Reconciliation Week: What will you do?

All Australians are challenged to do something positive towards reconciliation during this year's National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June) and then to let the world know via social media.

Reconciliation Australia CEO, Ms. Leah Armstrong, said National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time to build better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australians and to come together to acknowledge the enormous contributions that Australia's First Peoples have made to the country.

"I challenge the millions of Australians of good-will to organise events and conduct small local acts of reconciliation to build community cohesion and respect," said Ms Armstrong. "Reconciliation Australia is determined that this year's NRW will be the most successful of all time and we want social media to buzz with the optimism and enthusiasm that characterise this important week."

Ms Armstrong urged Australians to come together around barbeques, community parties, concerts and other cultural events and revel in being Australian while acknowledging the role and sacrifices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the building of this nation.

"Local government across Australia will hold Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag raising ceremonies, Sydney University will host its annual "sea of hands" event and in Townsville an Indigenous Catholic Council Reconciliation Dinner will be held" said Ms. Armstrong. "This is a week for communities to take the lead in the reconciliation movement."

NRW Ambassadors including Gurrumul Yunupingu, Aussie hip-hop legend Urthboy, up and coming singing sensations Thelma Plum and Emma Louise, as well as Naomi Wenitong from Murri outfit The Last Kinection will all be contributing to the celebration on social media as NRW focuses on music and its power to unite Australians.

Themed "Let's talk Recognition" the week will be a chance for Australians to learn more about proposed changes to the Australian Constitution to recognise Australia's First Peoples.

Ms. Armstrong said the imminent referendum on changing the Australian constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People means this year's NRW takes on "a new significance". "This is the next step towards reconciliation and NRW will create opportunities to build community awareness and support for the move toward constitutional recognition."

Ms. Armstrong urged Australians to organise their own reconciliation events and log them in the NRW website diary pages, Reconciliation Australia's Facebook site and tweet them with #NRW2013 and #recognition hashtags. For other ideas go to: www.reconciliation.org.au/nrw

Reconciliation Australia is the national organisation promoting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. For more information visit: www.reconciliation.org.au

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