



STATEMENT FROM PARTICIPANTS

We come from all parts of the globe. Some of us migrated here, some of us were born here. Some of our ancestors played a role in the theft and occupation of Aboriginal lands. Having learned the truth, we feel that we must state clearly that we do not support the colonial occupation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands.

Many of us here are very far away from our ancestral homes - in some cases homes that have been rendered unlivable or difficult to carry out a peaceful and stable life. Many of our parents or grandparents fled situations that the Australian government either supported or were complicit in. Some of us can't even return to our ancestral homes due to policies that the Australian government continues to support. In short, people don't usually leave their homes, their lands, their trees, their whole way of life, unless they have been forced to for one reason or another.

But we are here now and in our being here we feel it is important to state that we do not recognise Australia's legitimacy as a sovereign power of this land. It is only the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, whose sovereignty was never ceded, that we recognise as the traditional, cultural and historical owners of this land we now inhabit.

Although white Australia has abused migrant labour and marginalised some of our communities, we must also be clear that we have directly benefited from the theft and occupation of this land. All the more reason why we feel we must speak out about the murderous and thieving policies of the Australian government that are clearly unjust and that continue before our very eyes.

By accepting the Aboriginal Passport the recipients actively commit to respect and protect the land and its people. This includes speaking out and acting against the unabated murder of Indigenous people in various Australian institutions, as well as the continual theft of Aboriginal land by large corporations with the protection of the Australian government.

Also, the passport ceremony is not intended to be a feel-good event. As migrants that have come to live and be privileged by a colonial occupation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands, we believe that it is our duty to respect the people, the stories and the land, if we chose to continue living here.

Informed by the past and current situation here, we look forward to a better and stronger tomorrow. We look forward to walking with our Indigenous brothers and sisters towards a better day shaped by the integrity and truth of this land and its people.