

### **Inaugural Team Workshop 28, 29 & 30 March 2019**

With warm welcome by Dr. Matilda House to her country, she introduced herself and her diplomatic role in her country, Ngambri (Canberra) over many years. She expresses her happiness with participating in the workshop and emphasised the importance of Indigenous Diplomacy.



Can we have some of key statements assembled as resources for students? What PM's have said lie Hawke's speech, or Keating's Redfern speech of the Apology. I think that would be useful. I want students to see what politicians have done with words. We can learn to move forward by reading. Diplomacy starts when people come into someone else's country.



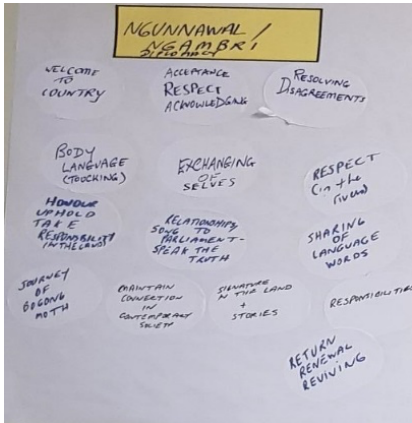
Makarraṭa... there is no exact word in English. Treaty does not equal Makarraṭa. When someone has made a killing or someone has interrupted a governance system they have to face Makarraṭa. The offender has to be made to feel remorse. They have to say "I am sorry for what I did" and accept what they will get. It is like restorative justice. it isn't an eye for an eye. If something has happened we need to clear a ground, we need to make a space for diplomacy.



What uncle (Yinjiya) says is true, the overlap between nations is a neutral space. You must create that space before treaty and negotiation. Tribal diplomacy in Torres Strait also requires this neutral space.



The elders from respective country in group discussed and selected keywords and points related to 'what' and 'how' the Indigenous Cultural Diplomacy could be...

## Ngambri Ngunnawal

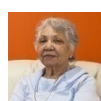


The mind map includes the following concepts:

- WELCOME TO COUNTRY
- ACCEPTANCE RESPECT ACKNOWLEDGING
- RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS
- BODY LANGUAGE (TOUCHING)
- EXCHANGING OF SELVES
- RESPECT (in the future)
- HONOUR UPHOLD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE LAND
- RELATIONSHIPS SONG TO PARLIAMENT - SPEAK THE TRUTH
- SHARING OF LANGUAGE WORDS
- JOURNEY OF BOGONG MOTH
- MAINTAIN CONNECTION IN CONTEMPORARY SITUATION
- SIGNATURE IN THE LAND & STORIES
- RESPONSIBILITY
- RETURN RENEWAL REVIVING

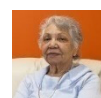
Keywords: welcome to country, body language (touching), honour, uphold, take responsibility in the land, journey of Bogong moth, acceptance, respect, acknowledging, exchange of selves, relationships, speak the truth, maintain connection in competency, resolving disagreements, respect, sharing of language words, return, renewal, reviving...



Welcome to country is so important. Is it about paying respect to elders and others. It is about being accepted and respect - acknowledging the traditional owners no matter where you come from. I want to talk about body language. It is very important. Aboriginal people, no matter where you come from, your body language brings you into country. Then there is a welcome to country. It is about an exchanging of selves.



Ngambri means 'sleep/camp' and Ngunnawal means 'here'. When Canberra was 'settled', many Indigenous people were buried outside their proper region, but their spirit is still here. Respect is the grinding stone – it is in the country. Through law and custom we continue to maintain our connection with the land. Every November there is the Bogong Moth Festival where people gather to a rock where a huge fire is made. After the fire burns out the rock is swept and is hot enough to cook the moths. It is where all different clans come together annually – the eagle people and the crow people. It is a diplomatic gathering of the clans.



Respect, not caring where one comes from we all must work together. Respecting one another's country when we visit. This is about the exchanging of self. Diplomacy is exactly that, exchange the self and working together.

## Elders of Torres Strait Islands



Keywords: relationships, governance, sovereignty, communication, rights, peace keeping, remorse, tree planting, coconut, goodwill, respect, mark, food, feasting, real time tribal, diplomacy, don't wait, different fruit in basket- satisfying lots of laws, extract and identify core principle, knowing constituents, gift giving, stand, be recognised until ready / might be spirit, Kernge, kwod, balance of lore/law, wakunu Niyay, negotiating boundaries, Kab woeydhay, authorised person, knot at end of rope, protocol, social justice, understanding your place, respect, introduction, foundation



Tribal diplomacy has been in place since dawn of time. Sitting on the mats together symbolises the coming together with your identity and representation. Tying a knot at the end of the rope to symbolise the tying of a deal. Like the Makarraṭa, it is important to right the wrongs from the past before the healing process can begin.



The analogy of a basket of fruit: Every fruit in the basket has a core and centre that is surrounded with flesh and skin. Each fruit is different but has a core similarity. It is important to find and make a common ground. The Torres Strait is working in real time diplomacy between Australia, Indonesia and PNG as well as the traditional aspects.



The treaty recognises law, LAW. It is an internationally recognised instrument. It also recognises lore, LORE. The two sit side by side. As a diplomat, it is important to facilitate and have a good understanding to make the space to negotiate.

## Yolŋu elders of east Arnhemland



government to government, with macassans, partnerships, parliament is land itself, different levels – diplomats, message sticks – one community to another, safe way to work together, story from different nations, one/first fire, land, seasons, language, mala, sort through the system of law, mediate clans, setup justice system, charcoal – knowledge passes to younger generation, levels of education, learning for younger generation, diplomacy is a practice, Garmā, Riyarawrra (higher level), Different clans come into the space, ṇurrŋitj, way of create reality, gift giving, wind, manikay, knowledge system, makarraṭa, diplomats from Nārra areas, bāpurru, system of law (not lore), raypirri, each clan diplomats, restorative justice, bring to fireplace, leadership, roles & responsibility, clear pathway (thru justice, law & order), sit down together, creating the space for negotiation...

**Bāpurru:** a collective entity formed by patrilineal human descendants. The members of the same bāpurru look after the same dhāruk (language), manikay (songlines), miny'tji (clan designs) and many other institutional constituents that emerged during the creation of Yolŋu world.

**Dhuwa / Yirritja:** Everyone (e.g. Yolŋu, Macassan) and everything (e.g. the body of water, land, wind) of Yolŋu world belongs to either Dhuwa or Yirritja - moiety in anthropological terminology.

**Dalkarra / Dŋirrikay:** Ceremonial leader of Yirritja (Dalkarra) and Dhuwa (Dŋirrikay). To become a knowledgeable person is the journey of Yolŋu individuals within collective care of kinship to find the knowledge and skill innately inherited from one's father and mother. It is not something that you externally acquire or learn from something, yet is something that you internally learn within yourself.

**Djalkiri:** Foundation of law and custom embedded by Ancestral beings during the creation and presently lying under ṇurrŋitj (charcoal ashes) from which Yolŋu internally learn within oneself.

**Garmā:** a spatio-temporal arena where Yolŋu human and other-than-human of Dhuwa and Yirritja come together, negotiate direction and plan ahead. The aspiration, interest, and concerns of both sides are to be taken equally and seriously. None of the voice is tokenistic at Garmā.

**Gurruṭu:** kinship and its practice. Everyone and everything of the Yolŋu world is mutually connected and nurturing through gurruṭu. In pre- and postcolonial history Yolŋu traditionally adopted 'others' such as international traders, newly introduced materials, Christianity brought by Methodist Overseas

Mission into gurruṯu with the purpose of creating a diplomatic space and working together, but also looking after them properly while they were (are) on Yolṁu country.

**Manikay:** Songlines with which Yolṁu embody the map of country. Together with ancestral footsteps, the sound of clap sticks and yidaki (didgeridoo), the landscape of Yolṁu country is emerging. It tells about the geographic journey of human and other-than-human, such as two different current of waters (fresh and salt, Dhuwa and Yirritja) meet, dialogue and diverge, and the fumes from cooking turtle rises and forms a cloud at particular place in particular time.

**Milkarri:** In the course of Yolṁu men singing manikay (songlines) in ceremony such as funeral and circumcision, Yolṁu women cry milkarri, tears. The knowledge of particular place and time ancestrally and continuously becomes enrich while being sung, cried, danced, and painted by particular collective group of people, namely yothu-yindi (child-mother), māri-gutharra (maternal grandmother and her siblings – their maternal grandchildren), wakupulu (maternal great-grandmother and her siblings) and yapapulu (great-great-grandmother and her siblings).

**Nurrngitj:** Charcoal ashes holding the foundation of Yolṁu law and custom. Manikay (songs) and milkarri (ceremonial crying) rises from the ashes and returns to the ashes.

**Närra:** Restricted, closed and sacred ceremony involving sacred objects.

**Ringitj:** A geographic location where the journey of songlines sung, danced, and painted by various clan nations meet each other. This clot forms a local assembly upon which particular groups of people form a ceremonial platform that involves (again) yothu-yindi (child-mother), māri-gutharra (maternal grandmother and her siblings – their maternal grandchildren), wakupulu (maternal great-grandmother and her siblings) and yapapulu (great-great-grandmother and her siblings).

**Riyawarra:** A place of public knowledge practice, participation and performance. On Riyawarra the representation of all Yolṁu knowledges are made visible and treated equally with seriousness. Makarr Garma is the alternative terminology and spatio-temporality of Riyawarra.

**Wäṁa:** A clan estate collectively cared and nurtured by Yolṁu kinship assembly called yothu-yindi (child-mother), māri-gutharra (maternal grandmother and her siblings – their maternal grandchildren), wakupulu (maternal great-grandmother and her siblings) and yapapulu (great-great-grandmother and her siblings). Each individual clan estate holds the foundation of Yolṁu law that ancestrally emerged when Ancestral Beings (e.g. figures of human spirit, crocodile, honey bee) were shaping the landscape of east Arnhemland.

**Wata:** Each direction and seasonal wind such as bulunu (east wind) and lungurrma (north wind), even a cyclone – burrmalala, has its kinship with people and country.



Painted with ground white clay, Yinija, Gawura, Bulkanhawuy, Warmbirrirr, Yinin, Michaela and Nori brought the sugar bag hunter songline to the meeting area. Gawura led this Dhuwa ceremony together with Yinija and Bulkanhawuy of his gutharra (maternal grandchild) under the supervision and evaluation Yirritja bāpurru. This ancestral journey was embodied by hitting clap sticks, playing yidaki, dancing with ancestral steps, painting with white clay on our forehead (re-presentation of sugar bag) and overhead (re-presentation of freshwater stream running through Yinin's homeland - Dhālinbuy). Not only did it create a diplomatic space between Yolŋu bāpurru participating this workshop - Marranju, Djambarrpuyŋu, Wangurri and Gupapuyŋu, but also invited the elders of Torres Strait Islands and Ngambri-Ngunnawal to the same diplomatic space temporarily established at Hedley bull Building at ANU.



Garma is a diplomatic, public, open, common, and secular arena for everyone and everything to participate and discuss matters. The sound of clap sticks creates a space, and two beats of clap sticks means that the ancestral creator is making a common ground and drawing an attention to other clans according to the journey of songlines. Gawura, Yinija and Bulkanhawuy drew on a whiteboard the ancestral track of journey through which the sugar bag hunter travelled and made its diplomacy with other Ancestral Beings while creating and shaping Yolŋu world.



Australian government is responsible for establishing laws to order and discipline its people. Their parliament is a building; our parliament is our land. Both men and women have a role. During the Njārra ceremony women don't see men. They listen to men singing and wait for them to



come closer to the knowledge tree – *djuṭa*. Surrounding the knowledge tree, men and women name and claim different nations using own languages.



Djirrikay, a Dhuwa ceremonial leader on the knowledge tree.



Following the discussion on the political institution of Nj̄arra (a legislative body of land) and Parliament (a legislative body of government), we watched [Riyararray YouTube video](#) - a documentary of Nj̄arra ceremony held in Milingimbi community in 2008. It was an institutional response to the Northern Territory National Emergency Response (also known as The Intervention) that compulsorily imposed discriminatory changes to Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, such as alcohol restrictions, welfare reforms, compulsory health checks for all Aboriginal children, and the acquisition of Aboriginal township. Participants of the Riyawarra ceremony had decided to make visible the uncommonness of differing worlds in a place that constituted a blind-spot of Western parliamentary practice. By holding an exceptional Nj̄arra in Milingimbi, they drew attention to the very sites that the Australian government had sent the army and the police to, looking for pornography and practices of abuse. The video of the ceremony, uploaded to YouTube, opened up those sites and for a brief moment showed what was inside them: not alcohol and pornography, but ceremonial practices of ancestral law just as codified and elaborate as Australian parliament.



Much more from Yolŋu, Ngambri-Ngunnawal and Torres Strait cultural diplomacy practice was shared and exchanged between the groups with a ‘core similarity’ (borrowing this terminology from uncle Willie Wigness). I felt warmly welcomed and fiercely ignited by the tireless work by all Aboriginal and Torres Strait nations across country toward the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty, diplomacy and the national level of treaty with Indigenous nations of Australia. After returning to Darwin, Yolŋu elders developed a series of textual and audio(visual) resources, including the history of makarraṭa.