



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As we begin, we acknowledge the traditional custodians on whose ancestral lands we are meeting today. We recognise the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to country, and pay respect to the cultural authority and traditions with which they have gifted this place.

As we begin, we acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia, the traditional custodians of this land. In doing so, we express our sorrow for the loss and grief experienced by Aboriginal Australians because of their alienation from traditional lands, the loss of lives and freedom, and the forced removal of children.

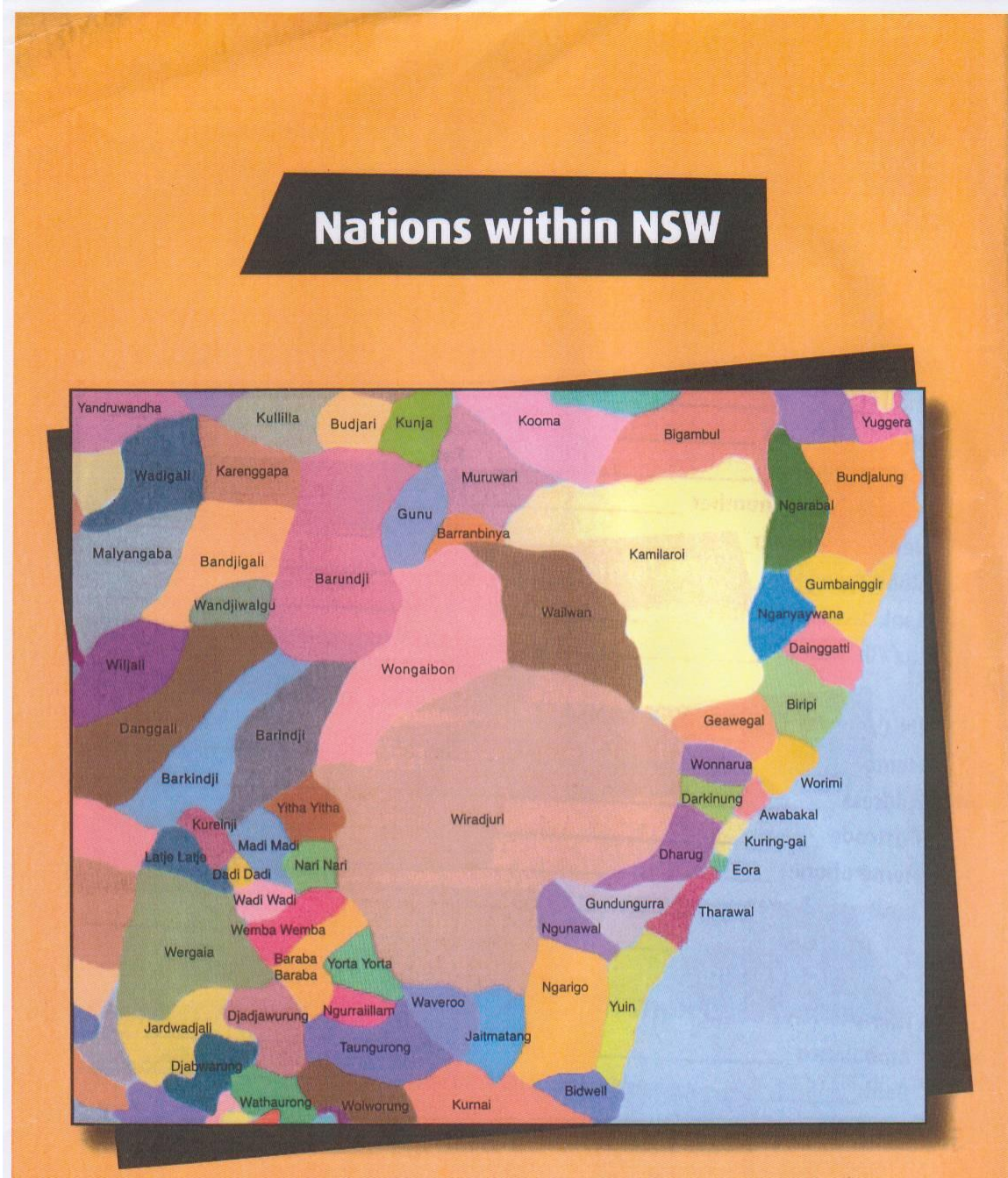
Before I begin I wish to acknowledge the \_\_\_\_\_ people, the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which this forum is taking place. I acknowledge too, elders past and present, and Aboriginal people here today. In so doing I recognise my personal obligation to work towards the achievement of justice, human rights and reconciliation with Australia's Indigenous peoples.

We gather here today with an awareness of the primacy of the First Peoples of this land, who have been custodians of this country for many thousands of years. We acknowledge the importance of mutual respect and understanding, and the benefits of a close and informed relationship. We are committed to furthering reconciliation and to ensuring that the First Peoples of this nation are valued for their contribution to Australian life.

As we begin, we acknowledge the \_\_\_\_\_ people, the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which this forum is taking place. We recognise the unique cultures of the first Australians and the barriers faced by many Indigenous communities in accessing services. We will support initiatives that enable our agencies to share and coordinate resources and infrastructures that honour Indigenous contributions to our country. We are committed to being flexible and willing to learn from those around us, so that we can ensure that services and programs are tailored to the needs of Indigenous Australians, particularly those in regional and remote communities.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and occupiers of the land where we are now gathered and recognise that it continues to be sacred to them – the \_\_\_\_\_ people of the \_\_\_\_\_ nation. We acknowledge them as guardians of the earth and of all things that grow and breed in the soil; as trustees of the waters - the seas, the streams and rivers, the ponds and the lakes - and the rich variety of life in those waters. We thank them for passing on this heritage to every people since the Dreamtime. We acknowledge the wrongs done to them by newcomers to this land, and seek to be partners with them in righting these wrongs and in living together in peace and harmony.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australia. We must always remember that under the concrete and asphalt, this land is traditional Aboriginal land.



Prepared by Jan Barnett rsj and the Social Justice Committee of the Conference of the Leaders of Religious Institutes in NSW [CLRI(NSW)] for use by religious, their colleagues and their ministries.