

# News Release

Khatija Thomas  
Co-Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement

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9 September 2011

## Commissioner to speak at Aboriginal Community Seminar

Co-Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement, Khatija Thomas, will be a guest panellist at Anglicare SA's Aboriginal Community Seminar on constitutional recognition for Aboriginal people on Thursday 15 September in Adelaide.

The Seminar, hosted by the CEO of Anglicare, Dr Lynn Arnold, is part of Anglicare SA's *Count Me In: 50% plus You!* campaign to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples recognised in the Australian Constitution.

Ms Thomas, who began her position as Co-commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement in January this year, was delighted to have been invited to be a panellist and speak at the Seminar.

"Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised in the Australian Constitution is paramount in the path to true reconciliation and we can not achieve true reconciliation unless this important step is taken," said Ms Thomas.

"I believe it is imperative that the first peoples of Australia are recognised and our rights protected in the preamble and body of our national and our state constitution," said Ms Thomas.

Prior to her appointment as Co-commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement Ms Thomas was a solicitor with the South Australian Native Title Services, working on projects to strengthen Aboriginal community governance, participation in and implementation of native title benefits.

"Ever since I was old enough to understand the lack of recognition of Aboriginal people I have wanted to do whatever I could to change this," said Ms Thomas.

"I am currently enrolled in a Master of Public and International Law and to be part of the process to have the Australian Constitution changed to reflect Australia's true culture would be a great honour for me."

Having worked for the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement, the South Australian Native Title Services and more recently providing legal representation and advocacy for Aboriginal women, Ms Thomas brings a wealth of knowledge to the seminar and is looking forward to sharing her views and hearing the views of others.

### **Media Contact**

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