



25 January, 2022

‘Freeing’ the Aboriginal flag will do nothing to free indigenous communities from poverty and deprivation

While the decision by the Commonwealth to take control of the copyright on the Aboriginal flag is welcome it will do little to address the disadvantage and marginalization First Nations people across Australia live with every day.

Francis Sullivan, Chair of Catholic Social Services Australia, said today Aboriginal communities still struggle with below average vaccination rates, access to health services, education and social services.

“The First Nations suicide rate is double that of the general population,” Mr Sullivan said.

“Well under a third of First Nations students finish year 12 compared to almost 90 percent of non-Indigenous Australians.

“Twice as many First Nations children aged below four are likely to die as non-Indigenous children and First Nations people make up roughly a third of all full-time prisoners, while accounting for just 2 percent of Australian’s adult population.

“The statistics go on to tell an appalling story of disrespect and disregard.

“Little will be achieved by the Commonwealth holding the copyright to the Aboriginal flag to address this appalling situation.

“The Prime Minister says ‘We’ve freed the Aboriginal Flag for Australians,’ how about freeing Indigenous communities from systemic and institutionalised poverty and deprivation,” Mr Sullivan said.

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