



## **CLC mourns towering leader and statesman**

The Central Land Council is flying the Aboriginal flag at half-mast as its members and staff mourn the loss of one of the nation's greatest Aboriginal leaders, Mr Yunupingu.

"Mr Yunupingu devoted his life to fighting for our land rights and our right to determine our own affairs," Central Land Council chair Matthew Palmer said.

"Our hearts go out to his family, the Gumatj clan, to Yolngu and all his friends and admirers."

Mr Palmer said the former long-term chair of the Northern Land Council was a strong advocate for the Voice to Parliament.

"Mr Yunupingu chaired the Northern Land Council when he, my predecessor Wenten Rubuntja, and other leaders presented the prime minister with a bark painting that became famous as the Barunga Statement," Mr Palmer said.

The statement called on the commonwealth parliament to "negotiate with us a treaty recognising our prior ownership, continued occupation and sovereignty, and affirming our human rights and freedom".

Prime Minister Bob Hawke promised that he would work to conclude a treaty with Aboriginal Australia by 1990 and lived to regret breaking that promise.

"Later this year we have an opportunity to right this wrong and take a significant step towards Mr Yunupingu's vision.

"Let's honour him by not wasting this once-in-a lifetime chance," Mr Palmer said.

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