



Australian Government
Indigenous Business Australia

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MEDIA RELEASE
First Nations to attend Economic Opportunities Conference in Sydney

In a whole-of-government initiative to advance the economic cause of First Nations peoples, Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) will jointly host a First Nations Economic Opportunities Conference in Sydney next year.

Prime Minister John Howard is expected to open the four-day event that has the support of Employment and Workplace Relations Minister, Kevin Andrews, and Senator Amanda Vanstone, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.

Scheduled to take place from 17-20 July 2006, the event will cater for up to 500 people and feature 160 Indigenous delegates from Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States and Fiji.

“The aim is to assist and promote the Indigenous entrepreneur and allow a sharing of business knowledge, expertise and insight for the upliftment of First Nations peoples,” said IBA chairman Mr Joseph Elu.

“It is our intention to bring together people from a diverse range of disciplinary fields and nations who are engaged in developing, have ownership of, or have an impact on the emerging Indigenous business landscape,” Mr Elu said.

Minister Andrews said the watershed conference, which follows the recent launch of the Government’s Indigenous Economic Development Strategy, would allow Australians to learn from the achievements of Indigenous groups in other parts of the world. For that reason he would welcome a strong presence by the private sector.

Senator Vanstone said the event was unprecedented in Australia and would provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to showcase their successes while comparing notes with foreign participants.

The event is supported by a number of Australia’s most prominent Indigenous business leaders who recently met in Alice Springs to discuss its development.

Highlights of the First Nations Economic Opportunities Conference will include a Youth Forum to encourage young Indigenous entrepreneurs to advance their



aspirations in business. Mining, tourism and property development will feature as key elements in a busy conference programme.

For further details call conference organiser Ms Trudi Ridge on 0429 920 096 or email trudi.ridge@iba.gov.au

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