

Patrick Dodson

Former Senator and Australian indigenous Rights Activist

Patrick Dodson is a Yawuru man from Broome in Western Australia. He is one of Australia's most respected Indigenous leaders, has been recognised as a Living National Treasure, and is often warmly regarded as Australia's 'father of reconciliation'. He has dedicated his life work to being an advocate for constructive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples based on mutual respect, understanding and dialogue. A major figure in Indigenous affairs, Patrick has consistently shown remarkable leadership, courage and vision from a young age.



After completing his schooling, Patrick enrolled to study for the priesthood and became Australia's first ordained Aboriginal Catholic priest. Unable to blend Catholicism and Aboriginal spiritual belief, Dodson left the priesthood after many years of confrontation. Following his departure from the church in 1981, Patrick turned his attention to Indigenous matters and reconciliation.

He became a Senator of Western Australia, and known for his work for Aboriginal Reconciliation in Australia and internationally. He has advocated for reforms within the justice system in Australia, was a Royal Commissioner into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, inaugural Chair of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, and Co-Chair of the Expert Panel for Constitutional Recognition of Indigenous Australians.

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