



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **First Australians' ancestral remains return to country**

24 March 2017

A repatriation ceremony was held at the Australian Embassy in Berlin last night to respectfully acknowledge the unconditional return of three Indigenous ancestral remains from German institutions.

Direct descendants, community members and representatives from Aboriginal Land Councils attended the repatriation ceremony.

The Australian Government will now support those in attendance as they accompany the ancestral remains home.

Two ancestral remains were returned to community members and direct descendants from Indigenous communities located in Far North Queensland and the Clarence River region in New South Wales.

Direct descendants received granddad Barry, King Ng:tja of the Ngadjon-Jii community.

Representatives from the Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council and Yaegl Local Aboriginal Land Council received an ancestor on behalf of the two Land Councils as well as a third council from the Clarence River region, the Birrigan Gargle Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The delegation will also accompany the return of an unnamed ancestor to Australia so further provenance research can be undertaken to identify the community of origin.

The Government welcomes the decisions by the Senckenberg Research Institute in Frankfurt, the Berlin Society of Anthropology, Ethnology and Prehistory and the Charité Medical University, Berlin, to facilitate the respectful return of the ancestral remains to descendants in Australia.

To date, 51 Australian Indigenous ancestral remains have been returned from Germany through the Government's Indigenous Repatriation Program since it started in the early 1990's.

The Government is committed to working with and supporting Indigenous communities to pursue the unconditional return of their ancestral remains held

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in overseas collections and within Australia. More than 1400 ancestral remains have been returned to Australia since the program's inception.

For more information about the program visit: [www.arts.gov.au/repatriation](http://www.arts.gov.au/repatriation)