

Alliance pledges international action on Muckaty waste dump

The Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA) is marking today's International Day of Action on Radioactive Waste with a renewed call for the Muckaty nuclear waste dump plan to be abandoned.

A site in the Muckaty Land Trust, 120km north of Tennant Creek, is being targeted to host a low and intermediate level federal waste facility, despite continued opposition from many Traditional Owners of the Land Trust.

The Muckaty plan has gained increasing international attention, with presentations outlining community opposition featuring at major international conferences on radioactive waste this year in Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

Donna Jackson, ANFA cochair (Larrakia Nation) said, "At the annual ANFA meeting in August, a large delegation of Muckaty people informed us of their ongoing and resolute struggle against the waste dump plan".

"Radioactive waste is a serious long-term threat to communities and the environment. ANFA 2010 delegates and affiliates committed to taking actions in our cities and towns to support Muckaty Traditional Owners resisting the dump and travelling to join them on country if called."

Ms Jackson added, "The federal government and the Northern Land Council continue to act as though our Sovereign rights as bloodline ancestors to country don't matter. The ceremony people from the Muckaty area are the proper bosses for their country, not the NLC, nor the Government. The ceremony people have said no, so that should be the end of the story".

ANFA cochair Rebecca Bear Wingfield (Arabunna/Kokatha Nations) has recently returned from the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) conference in Switzerland. The conference called for an end to uranium mining, the first step in the nuclear chain producing radioactive waste.

Ms Wingfield said "Kevin Rudd is currently at the UN, imploring that all charters must be respected by Member States. Yet his leader and party continue to ignore Article 29 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (endorsed by the ALP) that specifically prohibits dumping of hazardous materials without free, prior and informed consent."

"We stopped a nuclear dump in South Australia with an unwavering national campaign. The network of supporters has grown broader and stronger in response to the NT proposal. We will continue to work with indigenous communities, trade unions, health organisations and environment groups in Australia and internationally."

"On this International Day of Action on Radioactive Waste ANFA calls on the federal ALP government to abandon the contentious Muckaty waste dump plan and begin a process that enjoys both scientific merit and broad community consent. We stand in solidarity with communities around the world resisting government and industry attempts to force radioactive dumps on them," Ms Bear Wingfield concluded.

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