

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council

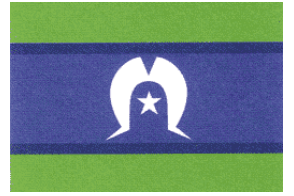
We, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council National Assembly 2009, express grave concern for our brothers and sisters living under the Northern Territory Emergency Response.

We draw the attention of the Minister to the following matters of urgency:

- Failure to alleviate poverty and third-world conditions
- Failure to respect the basic human rights of Aboriginal peoples and communities in contravention of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Failure to provide quality of life (e.g. delayed improvement to housing, overcrowding, risk of disease)
- Failure to consult truthfully and transparently
- Failure to educate and skill men and women for employment that can effectively address their own needs
- Failure to respect culture and ceremonies (e.g. sharing money, preventing travel to town to apply for money, tenancy agreements)
- Failure to honour the distinctive natures and cultures of communities. (Strategies need to be developed in consultation with each community and according to their needs.)
- The targeted application of income management on Aboriginal people. And so discriminating on the basis of race and place of living.
- The thoughtless erection of crude pornography signs in places where this problem does not exist
- Failure to heed the strong protests of such policies by numerous Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and groups across Australia.
- Failure to recognize the lasting and devastating effects of the Intervention on the human spirit and health of Aboriginal people.
- Failure to recognise and implement the recommendations of the 2007 Little Children are sacred Report/ to respond to the Combined NT Aboriginal Organisations and their Traditional owners.
- Failure to note that the creation of Hubs will only exacerbate problems (loss of connectedness, and loss of family ties and communal values of life...) Homelands and outstations must be provided funds...

These failures and limitations undermine the spirit of the Prime Minister's Apology of 13 February 2008.

We recommend ongoing genuine consultations and formation of real partnerships with the relevant parties in the N.T. We would like Government to engage regularly with Aboriginal leaders, Traditional owners, Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Church Lead bodies and leaders.



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We would like to see our cultures respected and acknowledged. Cultural integrity and self-determination are key imperatives for the way forward. We would ask that the Government be open to UN, Prof James Anaya's statement of 27.08.09.

We would like to see the reinstatement of the Racial Discrimination Act in the N.T. This must be in line with human rights principals and fulfil Australia's International Conventions and treaties.

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For Immediate Release