



Hon Te Ururoa Flavell & Marama Fox MP
Māori Party Co-leaders

māori
PARTY

Tēnā koe Hon Tony Abbott,

We write to you to voice our condemnation at the forced closure of Aboriginal communities in Australia as a result of your government's policies. We ask that your government honour its obligations to Australia's First Peoples.

As New Zealand's only indigenous political party formed in response to discriminatory actions of a previous government, the Māori Party shares the pain of Australia's First Peoples who face losing their connection to their ancestral land and the destruction of their communities as a result of government actions. The right of indigenous people to live on their traditional land and to live as a community is not a lifestyle choice, it is an integral part of our identity.

Recently Australia entered a new era in indigenous relations with the 2009 signing of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) receiving appropriate praises. Then-Minister Jenny Macklin hailed this as an effort to create a relationship built on "good faith, goodwill and mutual respect", although the Minister warned of returning to the flawed policies of the past.

The General Assembly of the United Nations recognised in the UNDRIP "the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources".

Article 8 of the UNDRIP declares "indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to force assimilation or destruction of their culture". It says the State should prevent and compensate indigenous peoples from "any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights".

Mr Abbott, your government's actions constitute a return to the flawed policies of the past and will result in the loss of basic human rights such as access to clean water and the right to choose where to live. These actions violate Australia's obligations to the UNDRIP. The cutting of federal funding for municipal services in remote communities is your government disregarding its responsibility to Australia's First Peoples.



We ask you to reinstate federal funding for these remote aboriginal communities and commit to basic human rights and values.

We ask you to fulfil Australia's responsibilities to the First Peoples of Australia and honour your commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Nā māua noa, nā

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Te Ururoa' and the signature on the right is 'Marama Fox'.

Māori Party Co-leaders, Hon Te Ururoa Flavell & Marama Fox