

ANTaR SA



Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (South Australia) Inc
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Britain must compensate Aboriginal people for radioactive fallout Joint Statement, August 2009

Signatories to the statement below call on all governments to immediately redress this ongoing and gross abuse of human rights.

ANTaR SA and ALRM endorse the recent public comment by South Australian Premier Mike Rann that the British Government is responsible for the damaging impact still continuing on Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the atomic bomb tests carried out in Australia in the 1950s. Mr Rann said of the British Government that it has "absolute responsibility to do the right thing by its and our service personnel and of course our Aboriginal people" (8 June, 2009).

ANTaR SA and ALRM are concerned that the British Government accept its responsibilities for the adverse consequences for the health and well being of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the British atomic tests at Monte Bello, Emu Field and Maralinga.

ANTaR SA and ALRM call on all Australian Governments and the British Government likewise to endorse that Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights to health, as provided for in various international treaties and conventions, need to be met.

ANTaR SA and ALRM condemn the British and Australian Governments of the day for the breaches of the 1836 Letters Patent establishing South Australia and vesting perpetual Aboriginal land rights in the SA Aboriginal people, the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the 1950 Genocide Convention, and the UN international decolonisation policy then in effect, in holding the atomic tests on Aboriginal lands.

Premier Rann made the statement following the decision of the British High Court permitting military veterans from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the UK to sue the British Ministry of Defence for compensation related to radiation exposure resulting from atmospheric nuclear tests they were exposed to conducted by Britain in Australia during the 1950s.

Aboriginal people and their descendants have an equal right to atomic test veterans to receive redress and treatment for radioactive injury and to pursue compensation for damages.

ANTaR SA and ALRM call on Premier Rann to provide financial and other support to SA Aboriginal people to pursue their interests against the British Government by resourcing them to take up legal action to pursue the same legal rights to compensation as veterans.

ANTaR SA and ALRM note that the tests occurred on Aboriginal lands prior to the 1967 Referendum when constitutionally the Commonwealth was legally incapable of offering an indemnity or indemnifying Britain against the impact of the atomic tests on Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their lands and waters.

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What you can do

If you or your organisation would like to endorse this statement, please complete the following:

We support the claim for proper compensation for Aboriginal people and their families affected by British atomic testing and the call for support from all Australian and the British Governments to achieve this

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Signature:

Postal address:

Email:

Phone:

Fax:

Web:

Other:

Please email or post this signed statement to antarsa@internode.on.net or ANTaR SA , PO Box 4018, Norwood South, SA, 5067.

Thank you.