



ANFA

Australian Nuclear Free Alliance

ANFA Meeting Statement 2012

The 2012 meeting of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA) was held on the weekend of October 5-7 on the land of the Arrernte people in Alice Springs. The Alliance brings together Aboriginal people, environment and health groups and trade union representatives concerned about uranium and nuclear projects.

Since we last met in September 2011, it has been confirmed in Federal Parliament that uranium from Australia was inside the stricken nuclear reactors at Fukushima. This news has had profound impacts on ANFA representatives, especially those whose country the uranium came from.

The ANFA gathering was attended by representatives of the following Aboriginal nations, organisations and affiliated groups:

Alyawarr, Anmatjere, Arabana, Arrernte, Gurindji, Iwaidja, Katyede, Koara, Kokatha/Anterkirinya, Kokatha/Mirning, Kokatha/Narrangar, Larrakia, Mirarr, Ngalia, Nyoongar Pitjantjatjarra, Tjupan, Walpiri, Wajarri Yamatji, Warlmanpa, Warramungu, Yamatji.

Anti-Nuclear Alliance of Western Alliance, Arid Lands Environment Centre, Australian Conservation Foundation, Beyond Nuclear Initiative, Choose Nuclear Free, Conservation Council of Western Australia, Environment Centre of the Northern Territory, Environmental Defenders Office, Friends of the Earth, Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Maritime Union of Australia, Medical Association for Prevention of War, Sortir Du Nucleaire (France).

The meeting addressed a range of issues and themes including:

Uranium exploration and mining

ANFA representatives from around the country spoke about uranium exploration and mining in each state and territory. Across Australia the nuclear industry is tireless and insidious in its efforts to gain a foothold at any cost. Pressure for uranium exploration is increasing in many places and mining companies are hopeful that new conservative state governments will weaken current restrictions.

While some Australian governments may be complicit in wanting to expand the nuclear industry, internationally the winds of change are blowing with many nuclear powered countries committing to phase out this toxic energy source.

Women's Session

The women's health session at ANFA called on our female politicians to listen to the personal stories of the many generations of women affected by the Maralinga fallout and stand up for justice for affected communities, workers, and veterans. The women supported those affected by the Fukushima nuclear disaster especially the women there who have acted strongly against the nuclear industry. We stand in solidarity with the women protesting against the Kudankulam nuclear reactor in India. We will do everything we can to highlight and stop the flow of uranium from Australia to India.

Men's Session

Representatives expressed deep concerns over the impacts of the transport of radioactive materials and called for federal radioactive waste to remain at designated federal storage sites at

Woomera (SA) and Lucas Heights (NSW) until there has been an independent public review of radioactive waste management in Australia.

Health

Despite nuclear industry assurances, we know that there is no safe dose of radiation. Many people at ANFA have personal or family experiences of health effects including from the atomic tests. There has never been compensation for atomic testing, which impacted Aboriginal people so greatly. Industry advocates claims that low levels of exposure to radiation are safe, that we need a nuclear industry to treat people with cancer, or that nuclear accidents like the Fukushima explosion are not too bad, but these claims are all false. The meeting affirmed its commitment to challenging the misleading claims of the nuclear industry and to building and strengthening alliances with health organisations.

Muckaty

Muckaty Traditional Owners updated the meeting on the campaign against the proposed national radioactive waste dump, calling it beautiful country that floods and tremors. Custodians talked about unity and solidarity for each other to ensure that when we stop the dump at Muckaty the government will not simply target another remote area. Radioactive waste is a national problem. We need to stop this toxic trade from the source: no uranium mining. ANFA resolved that radioactive waste should be stored at the federally designated facilities - Lucas Heights and Woomera - where we have nuclear expertise, until there has been a comprehensive inquiry into the least worst way to manage this waste.

Transport

ANFA calls for all nuclear material to be clearly labelled during transport and for all workers to be informed in advance if they will be handling these materials. ANFA supports the rights of all communities to refuse the transport of nuclear material through the places they live and work. ANFA calls on the government to publicise information about the routes and transport of nuclear material on rail and roads. We offer our support and solidarity to emergency services workers who are faced with the greatest risk. We will communicate with workers and share information about transport routes and risks. The meeting endorsed the Nuclear Freeways campaign.

Working united

ANFA will continue to engage with trade unions. We are all workers, we are all people with families and children and we are all concerned about the future. ANFA was also described as a union in its own right. We will work with community groups, churches, doctors and all people opposed to the nuclear industry. There was acknowledgement of the struggles we have with fair representation in the media. We resolved to work hard to become our own media producers.

Solidarity with India

Against a backdrop of rising resistance to nuclear power in India the meeting heard and expressed concerns about the Australian government's intention to sell uranium to that country. ANFA resolved to send a message of support to Indian anti-nuclear activists to coincide with Prime Minister Gillard's visit in mid October.

Nuclear Moratorium

The meeting called for a moratorium on all uranium mining and dumping of nuclear waste in Australia pending a public inquiry into the impacts of all aspects of the nuclear industry including uranium exploration, mining and exports as well as health impacts on communities living with the legacy of nuclear weapons and uranium mines.