

# Statements from Aboriginal Traditional Owners regarding the plan to import high-level nuclear waste to South Australia

October 2016

[www.anfa.org.au/traditional-owners-statements](http://www.anfa.org.au/traditional-owners-statements)

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## Irati Wanti, Vasinyi / 'The Poison – Leave It'

*Port Augusta – September 3, 2016*

South Australian *Anangu* and *Yura* (Aboriginal Traditional Owners) call on the Citizens Jury to reject the plan to turn our homelands into stores and dumps for international high-level nuclear waste.

The nuclear industry has a track record of Aboriginal dispossession and environmental pollution – from the atomic bomb tests to uranium mining to nuclear waste dump proposals.

The government says the nuclear waste dump proposal is different to the atomic bomb tests, but *Inaadi vasinyi* – radiation is radiation, poison is poison. Governments stripped Aboriginal people of land, land rights and heritage protections for atomic bomb tests and uranium mining, and exactly the same thing will happen with the high-level nuclear waste dump. Aboriginal Traditional Owners have first-hand experience. Poisoned water, poisoned plants, poisoned animals, poisoned people.

To this day Traditional Owners wear the scars and hurt and pain but still continue to tell their stories. We take responsibility to share our *muda, tjukurpa, wapar* (ancestral stories) and insist that you also respect our songlines.

We've seen this happen too many times before.

In the past we had no voice but today we have a voice and must be listened to. Then, we had no rights. Now we have rights and those rights must be respected.

We will oppose this dangerous matter and will not allow our sacred land to be sacrificed for a nuclear waste dump.

Health and well-being is so important in our lives. The Royal Commission process has already caused us stress, anxiety, and ill-health.

The Royal Commission and the SA government have shown ignorance of cultural issues affecting Aboriginal Traditional Owners. Let us remind you about the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including Article 29.2 about the rights of Indigenous people to say no to *vasinyi, irati* (toxic, poison) waste dumps.

Stop ignoring the Traditional Owners of the land!

Enough is enough. We say NO!

We call on the Citizens Jury to respect Aboriginal First Nations and to reject the high-level nuclear waste dump plan.

*Signatories:*

*Adnyamathanha: Noelene Ryan Lester, Enice Marsh, Lesley Coulthard, Heather Stuart (Luritja / Adnyamathanha yurartu), Lavene Ngatokorua (Wankangurru / Adnyamathanha), Regina McKenzie (Adnyamathanha / Kuyani / Luritja), Markeeta Stuart and Clay Stuart (Adnyamathanha / Luritja / Kuyani / Arabanna), Charles Jackson, Vivianne McKenzie.*

*Pitjantjatjara: Mima Maureen Smart OAM, Keith Peters, Roslyn Peters, Desmond Chuna, Joy West, Tjunkuna Rita Bryant, Roslyn Mervyn, Audra Bridley, Maureen Williams (Pitjantjatjara / Antikirinya), Benjamin Koko, Tjimpayi.*

*Yankunytjatjara: Irene Johnson, Pinku Dianne Edwards, Karina Lester, Lucy Waniwa Lester.*

*Pitjantjatjara / Yankunytjatjara: Nyimpula Edie King, Betty Nyangala Muffler.*

*Ngarrindjeri / Maori: Laura Winslow.*

*Antikirinya / Yankunytjatjara: Joanne Crombie, Karen Crombie.*

*Luritja: Joanne Walker.*

*Gunditjmara / Boandik: Johnny Lovett.*

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**Aboriginal Congress of South Australia – August 2015:**

We, as native title representatives of lands and waters of South Australia, stand firmly in opposition to nuclear developments on our country, including all plans to expand uranium mining, and implement nuclear reactors and nuclear waste dumps on our land.

Many of us suffer to this day the devastating effects of the nuclear industry and continue to be subject to it through extensive uranium mining on our lands and country that has been contaminated. We view any further expansion of industry as an imposition on our country, our people, our environment, our culture and our history. We also view it as a blatant disregard for our rights under various legislative instruments, including the founding principles of this state.

*Submission to Royal Commission – Aboriginal Congress of South Australia – August 2015 meeting in Port Augusta, attended by representatives of the following native title groups:*

*Adnyamathanha Aboriginal Corporation, Antakirinja Matu-Tankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation, Barngarla, De Rose Hill Ilpalka Aboriginal Corporation, Irrwanyere Aboriginal Corporation, Kurna, Kokotha Aboriginal Corporation, Narungga Aboriginal Corporation, Nauo, Ngadjuri Nations Aboriginal Corporation, Ngarrindjeri, Nukunu, Tjauwara Unmuru Aboriginal Corporation, Wangkangurru Yarluyandi Aboriginal Corporation, Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Land Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation.*

*<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Native-Title-Representative-10-09-2015.pdf>*

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**Tauto Sansbury, Chairperson of the Aboriginal Congress of South Australia:**

In our second meeting with [Royal Commissioner Kevin Scarce] we had 27 Native Title groups from all around South Australia. We had a vote on it. And it was unanimous that the

vote said no we don't want it. It was absolutely unanimous. Commissioner Scarce said 'well maybe I'm talking to the wrong people' and we said 'well what other people are you going to talk to? We're Native Title claimants, we're Native Title Traditional Owners from all over this country ... this land ... so who else are you going to pluck out of the air to talk to' ... we've stuck to our guns and we still totally oppose it. That's every Native Title group in South Australia.

Adelaide Congress Ministry, 18 August 2016,  
<https://www.facebook.com/adelaide.congress/posts/604440683059431>

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**Combined statement to the Royal Commission:**

We as the traditional custodians of this land oppose any activity which would seek to undermine the innate cultural connection we have with country. Our past, present and future is connected to country and our ancestral stories connect us to it and all things that reside on country. To interfere with these storylines is to disconnect our people from Mother Earth, and from each other.

*Submission to the Royal Commission from the following groups: Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation (registered native title body corporate – RNTBC); Dieri Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC; Irrwanyere Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC; Narungga Nations Aboriginal Corporation; Nauo Native Title Claimants; Ngadjuri Nation Aboriginal Corporation; Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation; Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Land Owners Aboriginal Corporation: 3 August 2015, <http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Representatives-of-Native-Title-Parties-04-08-2015.pdf>*

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**Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, August 2016 (abridged):**

We, the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress Adelaide Congress Ministry say to the Uniting Church:

Mr Weatherill and the Labor Party do not appear to be being really honest. They seem to be saying one thing and working towards another. They say they have made no decision – but to us they look like they are working towards a nuclear dump!

We reject the Government's betrayal of the clean land and water and air! God has given good things that we need that we all might nurture them and live well!

We reject the Government's betrayal of First People. The Government should respect the First People who speak for their country – and honour their sovereignty – They say no!

We reject the Government's promotion of money being more important than righteousness and justice – to emphasise the short term money value, and at the same time make unprovable assessments of risk over so many years seems either dishonest, or just crazy.

We reject the Government's denial of the experience and suffering of our families as they experienced the effects of waste and bombs. We have people in our families who were affected.

We reject the government's dishonesty and playing with words – in trying to slice off the bombs from the waste, the Maralinga tests from the waste, the fears from the facts, and the risks from the profits. It is wrong!  
This is a fact: We say No! No! No!

*Adelaide Congress Ministry, 18 August 2016,  
<https://www.facebook.com/adelaide.congress/posts/604440683059431>*

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**Combined statement, Port Augusta, 16 May 2015:**

South Australian Traditional Owners say NO! We oppose plans for uranium mining, nuclear reactors and nuclear waste dumps on our land. We call on the SA Royal Commission to recommend against any uranium mining and nuclear projects on our lands. We call on the Australian population to support us in our campaign to prevent dirty and dangerous nuclear projects being imposed on our lands and our lives and future generations.

*Endorsed by members from the following groups: Kokatha, Kokatha-Mirning, Arabunna, Adnyamathanha, Yankunytjatjara-Pitjanjatjara, Antikirinya-Yunkunytjatjara, Kuyani, Aranda, Western Aranda, Dieri, Larrakia, Wiradjuri.  
Endorsed by people from the following groups at later meetings: Warramungu, Warlpiri, Western Desert Cultural Bloc.*

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**Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation:**

The Royal Commission is exploring a range of issues which have been debated and considered by Kokatha People for many generations. It causes distress and hurt to the Kokatha People that there is a continuation of the discussion in terms of the nuclear fuel cycle notwithstanding that resolution has already been reached on the topic. It seems that each generation of Kokatha People is required to oppose the use, transport or storage of nuclear materials and their opposition is not heard. Kokatha consider the raising of this issue again, when it was resolved only a short period of time ago, is disrespectful. ...  
Kokatha are strongly opposed to any level of storage of medium and high level radioactive waste on their traditional country. This includes medium and high level nuclear waste from Australia or overseas. Generally, timeframes for dealing with radioactive waste ranges from 10,000 to 1,000,000 years. The storage of radioactive waste for extraordinarily long and indefinite periods of time is not a proper use of country and does harm to this and future generations.

*Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation, 2 August 2015, Submission to Royal Commission,  
<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Kokatha-Aboriginal-Corporation-03-08-2015.pdf>*

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**Kaurna Traditional Owners:**

Aboriginal people have always understood that uranium should be left alone; long before western science understood its dangers. Kurna are concerned that further involvement in the nuclear fuel cycle has the potential to divide aboriginal communities. Aboriginal people do not want greater extraction of uranium mining on country. This is bad stuff and should be left in the ground. These sorts of activities prey on vulnerable members of the community by offering large money compensations. It ignores those who are concerned with culture and heritage.

Aboriginal people do not want processing or manufacturing of uranium products to take place on their sacred land. There is still much trauma in the aboriginal community over the British testing of nuclear weapons.

Kurna do not support storage or disposal of nuclear waste in South Australia. Kurna are very concerned about the consequences for future generations should nuclear waste be stored in South Australia. How can future generations be asked to watch over it.

*Kurna, 2015, Submission to Royal Commission,*

*<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Kurna-Yerta-04-09-2015.pdf>*

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**West Mallee Protection (WMP), representing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people from Ceduna in western South Australia, submission to the Royal Commission:**

*[Responding to the Royal Commission's question as to what would need to be done to 'build confidence' in the establishment and operation of nuclear waste dump.]*

WMP finds this question superficial and offensive. It is a fact that many people have dedicated their time and energy to investigating and thinking about nuclear waste. It is a fact that even elderly women that made up the Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta – a senior Aboriginal women's council – committed years of their lives to stand up to the proposal for a low-level facility at Woomera.

They didn't do this because of previously inadequate processes to build confidence as the question suggests but because:

- A) Individuals held a deep commitment to look after country and protect it from a substance known as 'irati' poison which stemmed from long held cultural knowledge.
- B) Nuclear impacts were experienced and continued to be experienced first hand by members and their families predominately from nuclear testing at Emu Field and Maralinga but also through exploration and mining at Olympic Dam.
- C) They epitomized and lived by the worldview that sustaining life for future generations is of upmost importance and that this is at odds with the dangerous and long lasting dangers of all aspects of the nuclear industry.

The insinuation that the general population or target groups such Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta or the communities in the Northern Territory that succeeded them and also fought off a nuclear dump for Muckaty were somehow deficient in their understanding of the implications and may have required confidence building is highly offensive. ...

Over the last several decades the South Australian public have clearly presented their opposition to a nuclear waste dump. Aboriginal communities which have so far borne the brunt of the nuclear industry through nuclear testing, mining and proposed nuclear waste dump have also clearly and generously articulated their concerns.

South Australia made nuclear waste illegal under the "Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Act 2000" and the import, transport, storage and disposal of any wastes derived from nuclear reactors, or uranium enrichment plants, or from the conditioning and

reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, remains prohibited. The Royal Commission would be wise to look at the context of how this legislation came about and its merit in minimizing risks for South Australia.

*Submission to Royal Commission, <http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/West-Mallee-Protection-14-08-2015.pdf>*

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**Anggumathanha Camp Law Mob:**

Why we do not support the expansion of the nuclear industry in South Australia or anywhere else in Australia:

Our cultural knowledge and customary practices that dates back thousands of years warns us of the dangers associated with particular places in our country; the places where there is uranium is known as *vasinyi yarta* or poison ground, and we respect our Elders who shared their expert knowledge with us as the parents and grandparents of future generations, and as future custodians of the land and of our culture.

Our past experiences in dealing with mining companies and government regulatory bodies has not been empowering for us; quite the opposite. This makes us very mistrustful of the government's ability or willingness to represent our interests and fully include us in any decision making.

Since colonisation our lands and resources have been severely depleted, damaged and in some cases completely destroyed against our wishes, without our consent, and in the name of development so we ask Who stands to benefit the most from development? And at what cost to our environment?

As with our earlier experiences of dealing with government people, we are sceptical that our views will be ignored because we don't hold powerful positions in society – we speak in the traditional way – as Adnyamathanha experts and leaders not as scientific experts or lawyers. The lack of a well-thought out engagement strategy tells us that our views are not important, that government and industry will do what they want regardless of public wishes. ...

We have said several times in the past and we say it again: This poisonous waste generated by industry and government is not our problem, we did not create it and we did not want it to begin with. Leave uranium and other poisonous substances in the ground, follow the rules for sustainable living with Aboriginal cultural law, and follow the rules of best practice within industry.

A waste dump for the nuclear industry is a global issue. We don't want more waste to be generated, and we don't want the waste any more than other people do, so we ask the government and nuclear industry to stop adding to the waste pile, stop mining uranium, and stop pressuring vulnerable people into being stuck with this waste.

The push for a waste dump in SA keeps coming up repeatedly; we didn't want it then and we don't want it now. ...

Pressuring poverty stricken and isolated communities is unethical, and the public of SA have faced this issue several times in the last decade or more. Enough is enough.

All of the people of outback South Australia deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and there should be no elitist meetings behind closed doors with Native Title representatives.

We have experienced repeated efforts to force us to agree to a nuclear waste dump, more uranium mines, and increased dangerous ore transported through our land on unsealed and unsafe roads, this amounts to political and corporate bullying of rural and regional Australians.

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**Statement from Adnyamathanha Traditional Owners**

We have said 'no' to the mining, processing and transport of uranium ore and nuclear waste in the past and we say 'no' to the expansion of the nuclear industry now in 2015.

We demand that our Native Title Representative Body (Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association) actively represent our concerns as Traditional Owners.

Our ongoing connection to country depends on protecting our sites and resources for all generations – current and future.

*Port Augusta meeting, 16 May 2015*

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**Adnyamathanha Traditional Owner Deidre Coulthard**

I am 'Adnyamathanha Yuratu' (Aboriginal woman of the far Northern Flinders Ranges).

I am not against 'mining' because I was born in Leigh Creek. Leigh Creek is my home. Home is where the heart is.

I am against processing and transporting of uranium and waste storage/disposal here in South Australia.

I care for my heritage, culture, plants, animals and my next generation.

*Port Augusta meeting, 16 May 2015*

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**Adnyamathanha Traditional Owner Linda Coulthard:**

My name is Linda Coulthard.

I live in Copley, South Australia.

I am Adnyamathanha Elder of the Northern Flinders Ranges.

I am against the Radioactive Waste Repository.

I love my heritage, culture, land and family.

I want my grandchildren to be happy and healthy in their own backyard and to enjoy all or most of the Bush Tucker that I grew up on.

*Port Augusta meeting, 16 May 2015*

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**Eddie Nyimpula King and Jeanie Minunga:**

*Irati Wanti!*

The poison – Leave it!

*Tjitji tjuta nganama kanyini – ngaltutjara*

We're bringing up all our children – poor things.  
*Malu, kalaya nganana ngalkuni tjaku – kuka palya*  
We always eat kangaroo and emu – good meat.  
*Mukurinytja wiya Mukurinytja*  
We don't want it (the poison).  
*Ma-kati.*  
Take it away.  
*Kura! Kura!*  
Bad! Bad!  
*Irmang-irmangka, kumpurara – mai wiru tjuta.*  
Bush medicine and desert raisins are beautiful food.  
*Nganana Anangu Tjuta mukurinytja wiya.*  
We – Anangu-tjuta Aboriginal people – don't want it.  
*Wanti!*  
Leave it!

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**Rosemary Lester, a second-generation survivor of the Maralinga atomic tests:**

The carefully engineered terms of reference for the Royal Commission into the Nuclear Fuel Cycle in South Australia are being used to block a thorough investigation of the ongoing effects of radiation from the fallout of the Maralinga bomb test on Indigenous communities across South Australia. This is the latest example of Kevin Scarce and the Royal Commission ignoring and disrespecting Aboriginal people. He can expect fierce resistance from Aboriginal people in the firing line from plans to dump high-level nuclear waste in South Australia and other plans to expand the state's role in the nuclear industry.

*Media Release, 7 December 2015*

<http://antinuclear.net/2015/12/07/nuclear-royal-commission-blocks-lessons-learned-from-maralinga/>

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**Sue Coleman-Haseldine, a Kokatha-Mula woman from Ceduna, winner of the 2007 Premier's Award for excellence for indigenous leadership in natural resource management:**

I was born on Koonibba Aboriginal Mission in 1951. Atomic bomb tests began in the desert areas north of my birthplace in 1953 when I was two years old. First at Emu Fields and then Maralinga. I grew up under the Maralinga nuclear cloud. Do I want to see my state known worldwide as a nuclear waste dump? No. Do I have the right to subject our future generations to a life of nuclear fear? No. Accidents happen, be it at a uranium mine or on a nuclear freeway or at a nuclear reactor or a dump site.

*Media release, 12 February 2016,*

<https://ausnukefreealliance.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/media-release-12th-february-2016.pdf>

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**Mike Williams, Mimili Community, Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands, South Australia:**

We want the land, the trees, manta, the *kuka*, the rockholes, *kapi*; we don't want that money, you can keep it!

The land is important to *Anangu tjuta* because *tjitji* have to grow up, it's important for our ceremonies, for our dances, for our songs and because we are all connected to the land – it's our heritage.

In Japan, we heard that story about that big wave and how that place that uses uranium for power, how it got destroyed and spread that uranium everywhere, like Maralinga. We don't want to supply uranium here or to any other country.

That uranium is poison. That's not our story, *Nganampa wiya!* That's not our story!

If they get that poison from Australia and they use it, they should keep it in their country, not bring it back here. Why don't they want to keep it in their country?

You can keep your money and stay away from our land!

*29 July 2015, Submission to Royal Commission,*

<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Mike-Williams-30-07-2015.pdf>

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**Frank Young – Amata community member:**

When they test the bomb in Maralinga there were people. There were people living out in the scrub, bush. ... So that's why I'm going against this nuclear thing, and saying that we don't want it to happen again. ... If it doesn't happen, that will be good, because people – we want to save our children. It's really important for our future to, you know, no more poison coming into our land. ... So we want people to understand that *Anangu* people that think carefully in their own country and look after their land and people also. Give them life. And strongly I say no nuclear waste in our land.

*Frank Young, 4 August 2015, Submission to Royal Commission,*

<http://nuclearrc.sa.gov.au/app/uploads/2016/03/Frank-Young-04-08-2015.pdf>

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**Hilary Jane Walkitti Williams (Pitjantjatjara), 20 April 2016:**

We don't want this legal waste.

It's killing our *Anangu* – our people.

Back in the spinifex days, our people were free. They had no sickness in those days.

They hunted food in the bush- bush tuckers. No diabetic, no scabies, no *kulu* -lice, no kidney failure, heart disease. They were healthy people and they hunted food by walking bare feet.

They had no clothes.

Now, in the whitefellas' law, they have kidney disease and cancer. Now domestic violence- not the *Anangu* law.

Now they're again bringing that *una* – that poison – really stinky bad poison- Radiation!

We know about that radiation. It's happened before. And they want it to happen again. My grandparents passed away. My uncle passed through lung disease from the Maralinga atomic

bomb explosion. Kumana Milpuddie, my grandmother and my Mum. My Uncle was with my grandparents when he was about fourteen and they went through the bomb.

They were on the top of the hill looking out and seeing a lot of animals running and then they continued walking. As soon as they came out from the bush, they were walking towards the army Jeep. The soldiers were so surprised – how do these *Anangu* come across where the exploding was! The soldiers were in shock.

The soldiers took them to the Maralinga Village to check if they were toxified with the radiation. They kept them in a little cell and gave them clothes. They didn't want to wear them – chucked them away. Their dogs got shot. Some of them was dingoes. They were moved to a camp where a lot of *Anangu* got evacuated to from Ooldea – Ooldea Tank. Their relation, my other young Nana, Mabel Queama saw Edie – she was her first cousin.

I felt sad – I cried on TV when they interviewed me. When the producer lady interviewed me I cried.

We've got to make a stop to it! We've got to make a stop to this legal waste killing our people and plants!

We don't want that thing into Australia.

*Wiya wanti!* Leave it!

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**Rebecca Bear-Wingfield, Kokatha and Arabunna senior woman:**

They keep making the same mistakes, they keep overlooking human rights and they keep overlooking the evidence on the impacts of this industry. This proposal promises long term damage for short-term profit. There isn't a high level waste dump in operation anywhere in the world, so we are likely to just end up with stockpiles of radioactive waste and nowhere to put it. Both indigenous and non-indigenous people have been affected by the environmental and health related impacts of the British bomb tests, and now they want to impose an international nuclear waste dump on us. This has been defeated in South Australia once before and we will continue to fight.

*Media release, February 2016, [www.anfa.org.au/long-term-damage-for-short-term-gain-anfa-slams-royal-commissions-proposal-that-sa-host-an-international-nuclear-waste-dump/](http://www.anfa.org.au/long-term-damage-for-short-term-gain-anfa-slams-royal-commissions-proposal-that-sa-host-an-international-nuclear-waste-dump/)*

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**Kevin Buzzacott, Arabunna Elder:**

We will fight this industry across the country, whether it be the expansion of uranium mining or a nuclear waste dump. It is our cultural obligation and responsibility to care for our land. It's time the government and nuclear industry acknowledge and listen to us. There are and have been so many sick people as a result of this industry. Why has there not been a Royal Commission into the intergenerational health impacts of this industry? How will this Royal Commission measure the risks and impacts on culture and country? You cannot put a number on these things.

*Media release, 12 February 2016*

*<https://ausnukefreealliance.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/media-release-12th-february-2016.pdf>*

**Kevin Buzzacott:** They don't want to put it [nuclear waste] in the cities but in the desert because it is so deadly. The desert isn't empty. It has an ecosystem, it has people, and Aboriginal people have cultural connections to that land and an obligation to care for it. This is a disgraceful legacy for future generations. Is this what we want to leave our children, the burden of dealing with radioactive waste that no other country wants or can deal with?

*Media release, February 2016, [www.anfa.org.au/long-term-damage-for-short-term-gain-anfa-slams-royal-commissions-proposal-that-sa-host-an-international-nuclear-waste-dump/](http://www.anfa.org.au/long-term-damage-for-short-term-gain-anfa-slams-royal-commissions-proposal-that-sa-host-an-international-nuclear-waste-dump/)*

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**Tauto Sansbury, Chairperson of the Aboriginal Congress of South Australia:**

People need think about what this means for their future, their children and future generations. We are talking about the importance of country and the preservation of culture and safety of our Peoples whereas the Government seems more interested in economic development.

*Media release, 19 February 2016*

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**Statement to 'Know Nuclear' – the South Australian Government consultation process, from Pinku Dianne Edwards, Pitjantjatjara /Yankunyjatjara Elder, and Elsie Numitja Illi Pitjantjatjara Elder:**

We've got to say NO to this high-level radioactive waste!

We've got to think about the people. We've got to think about the animals and our bush tucker. We've got to think about the country.

We need the animals – they are our diet – kangaroos, lizards, wombats, rabbits, bullocks, sheep.

We think they want to kill us. They have already done it with that bomb. With this poison they'll kill everything like they did with the bomb. *Anangu* had sore eyes, running nose, sore throats, diarrhea and all sorts of illnesses. Even *kuru pika* – blindness came from that bomb. Now they're going to try it again on *Anangu* land. That's how it looks to us!

We have talked over and over about these things and they are still *pina wiya* – no ears! They, the government people, still don't listen.

All the Old People, the strong spokespeople of those days have gone. Now we in our turn are speaking up.

They will say they'll pay us for dumping the high-level waste in our country.

We say NO!

*Patjina* – the poison – we don't want it. *Patjina* or *irati* – these words mean the same. We don't want this poison – this radioactive waste. We don't want to live in a country that has high radioactive waste coming from other countries – maybe even worse than the bomb.

Why come here? We've got everything that makes a good country.

We don't want money. We want a free country! We don't want to live in a country that has high-level radioactive waste from other countries.

*Wanti!* Leave it!

This is our land.

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**Mima Maureen Smart OAM, Yalata Community, 2016:**

We don't want that waste on our land. Please take it away to your country and dump it over there. Because the damage that was already done, we learned from it, we teach all our children what the poison is about. Our people didn't have rights in that time. So now we got rights, we can speak up for justice. It's for our children's children.

*<https://vimeo.com/178573926>*

**Mima Maureen Smart:** The bomb brought death to our people on the land when they were still wandering in the desert; when they were still travelling from rockhole to rockhole. And all our families were told to go south. They came to Ooldea Tank when they settled and they seen that bomb.

It was really sad what's happened to that land. Looking at the painting. It was a beautiful place with nice sceneries and animals around and birds and people around. And the people were gathering food on the ground.

But after that bomb, people kept moving away and knew that place was destroyed by the bomb. But before that, they didn't understand the danger. But the white people knew. Why didn't they blast it in their own country? Why bring it to a beautiful country like Maralinga? The nuclear waste dump is not the best thing for us. The Minister is saying to bring the waste and dump it in South Australia. We don't want that waste dump either in Yalata, or around Maralinga, or Ooldea or Watson. Because the roads that are going across to Western Australia is the place we always be using for funerals, for visiting families and business. Please take it away and dump it in your country.

The damage has already been done with us – there are no old people in Yalata today. We teach all our children what the damage from the bombs is about.

*'Elders paint grim picture of future', [www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2016/1736/04-elders-paint-grim-picture.html](http://www.cpa.org.au/guardian/2016/1736/04-elders-paint-grim-picture.html)*

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**Keith Peters, member and immediate past Chairperson of the Maralinga Tjarutja Council, Yalata, 2016:**

This waste is going to damage our country, our environment, it's going to damage everything. It's going to bring sickness to people. Enough is enough! They've already damaged our country, Maralinga, and we are not going to have this disaster again. We need to keep our environment clean, and all the animals that we eat out here, so we can survive, so our next generation of children, they can survive. We can stand up together. It's not only Aboriginal people, it's all of South Australians need to stand up and say no.

*<https://vimeo.com/178841044>*

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**Statement from Maureen Williams (Pitjantjatjara / Antikirinya), Rowena Williams (Antikirinya/Yankunyjatjara/Pitjantjatjara), Gary Crombie, Michael Brown, and**

**Romano Williams (Pitjantjatjara / Antikirinya) – Umoona Community, Coober Pedy, August 2016 (abridged):**

We went to school – we understand these things. To us we can see. Oh well, you're going to put in South Australia.

We're not going to take the world's rubbish! It will kill you – everybody's rubbish. They can keep it in their own backyards!

We're not a dump in South Australia! We want to keep it beautiful.

They want to bring it where *Anangu* are. It might be a desert area but we still go out hunting. We still live off the land. We still take our kids out hunting as well. It's in our artwork – that tells the story.

They're coming into South Australia with all sorts of different dumps. Our mothers and grandmothers fought the other dump before.

We grew up with our fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers. We know the stories. We know what happened at Maralinga – from the dust at Maralinga. We want to protect our future generations. Man made things fail. Children are born deformed. That's really rough.

They're trying to say it's safe. It's not safe!

Other countries have problems with it there – why bring it to here?

Man made things will always fail.

At the meeting they were talking about this is an area without earthquakes. We have earthquakes! At White Cliffs out from Coober Pedy there was an earthquake that split the land. One part is up, the part next to it split down. That went all the way up to Ernabella in the APY Lands.

And what about the water. They think they'll store it here. They'll all be saying – 'It's all barren, open country.' They don't know about it – they don't know the country. We know where the water supplies are.

And when it rains the country comes back to life. The plants grow. The animals eat the plants. We eat them! We eat the food – good healthy food from our hunting. Our people are dying from eating artificial food – like in hamburgers that use meat from many parts. We eat food fresh and direct from the animal we have hunted ourselves. We have to protect the country, the water, the animals.

As soon as money is mentioned, some people change – get interested. But we're *Anangu* – we're from this country. Not from somewhere else. To us we can see.

Yes – we went to school. We understand these things.

We've seen the things change from our grandparents' time. They kept the country.

We're not going to take the world's rubbish.

*Signed (on handwritten original)*

*Maureen Williams, Rowena Williams, Gary Crombie, Michael Brown and Romano Williams.  
Coober Pedy 19th August 2016.*

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**Yami Lester, an Aboriginal Elder who was blinded by the British nuclear testing on the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands in the 1950s and 60s:**

A few years ago they cleaned up Maralinga from the waste that was left over from the bomb tests ... and now they're going to put more waste back there? That's not fair because it's

Anangu land and they won't be able to use that land. Members from the APY, Maralinga-Tjarutja and Arabunna, Kokatha lands say we don't want nuclear waste on our land.

*Verity Edwards, 3 March 2015, 'Maralinga victim of nuclear tests protests Weatherill dump bid', The Australian, [www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/indigenous/maralinga-victim-of-nuclear-tests-protests-weatherill-dump-bid/story-fn9hm1pm-1227245351150](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/indigenous/maralinga-victim-of-nuclear-tests-protests-weatherill-dump-bid/story-fn9hm1pm-1227245351150)*

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**Karina Lester, Chairperson of Yankunytjatjara Native Title Aboriginal Corporation:**

You know you feel gutted when they want to bring the nuke agenda back on. The place has already been contaminated. Traditional owners are trying to move on from what happened back in the '50s, but to propose it as a site for the waste, I think, is just another kick in the guts to the traditional owners up there at Maralinga-Tjaratja. Enough's enough.

*Wendy Glamocak, 28 February 2015, 'Maralinga could be flagged as nuclear dump site, opponent says in wake of SA royal commission', [www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-28/maralinga-could-be-flagged-as-nuclear-dump-site-opponents-say/6270848](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-28/maralinga-could-be-flagged-as-nuclear-dump-site-opponents-say/6270848)*

**Karina Lester:** On 8 February 2015, Premier Jay Weatherill announced A Royal Commission – Our Role in Nuclear Energy. This came as a shock and very disturbing as many of the members of Yankunytjatjara are descendants of or directly been impacted by the use of Nuclear Energy, in particular Maralinga in the 1950's and 60's, and we firmly say NO NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA. As stated above many of our members of Yankunytjatjara have experienced first hand the impacts of Nuclear Energy or had family members who have died, become sick, loss of eyesight, cancers or lost a child at birth and other health complication. These are real issues that still are fresh and faced by the members, day in day out. These issues have come about due to the Maralinga Tests in the 1950's and 60's here in our own back yard. South Australian needs to pause for a moment and reflect on our own history and past doings to the First Peoples of this State and this Nation. This is not only a debate for South Australians but for the whole of the Nation.

*Karina Lester, 16 February 2015, Submission regarding terms of reference for SA Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission, [http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/nuclear\\_royal\\_commission\\_submissions/LESTER%20Karina%20YNTAC%20Nuclear%20Power%20letter.pdf](http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/nuclear_royal_commission_submissions/LESTER%20Karina%20YNTAC%20Nuclear%20Power%20letter.pdf)*