



Northern Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Ten Years on from Mabo: Native Title - the facts, the fantasy, the fury and the furphy.

Monday March 5

Mr Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Chairman of the Northern Land Council, today called for a total rethink on the native title issue.

He said that Aboriginal people were witnessing a gradual whittling away of their native title rights under the current process and suggested that an agreement or a Treaty could be a solution.

“Today is the eve of a crucial test case in the High Court (Miriuwung-Gajerrong) that will decide what crumbs of native title rights have survived 10 years of government interference since Mabo,” he said.

“But what is really on trial is the commitment of Australia as a nation to native title and the whole idea of co-existence and reconciliation.

“If we prove that our native title is strong and meaningful, let’s not allow a repeat of the shameful response to Wik, which was the 10-Point Plan, amendments to the Native Title Act and bucketloads of extinguishment.”

Mr Yunupingu called for a serious discussion of the Treaty concept to give security to native title in the Constitution.

“It’s time for us all to stop and take a good hard look at how we lost the plot,” he said.

“We need to secure our law from the politics of the quick fix.”