



Northern Land Council

MEDIA STATEMENT

Breakaway Land Council proposal a slap in the face for Aboriginal peoples

12 July 2011

Around 100 Aboriginal traditional owners and community members voiced their strong disapproval for the Jawoyn Association's proposed new Katherine Region Land Council at a meeting before the Aboriginal Land Commissioner, Justice Howard Olney, in Katherine last week.

Jawoyn traditional Lisa Mumbin told the meeting that the Jawoyn Association was incapable of running a large and complex organization like a land council.

"The Jawoyn Association can't even manage itself properly right now so I don't know how it will be able to oversee the working of a land council," Ms Mumbin said.

"This is just a cruel and cynical trick being played on Aboriginal traditional owners across the Katherine region.

"The Jawoyn Association thought long and hard about asking for a new Land Council ten years ago - but back then it had strong leaders and strong support from traditional owners. Now it is just a shadow of the proud organization it once was."

Ms Mumbin said Jawoyn traditional owners wanted to know how much of their money had been spent on drumming up support for the Katherine Region Land Council proposal.

In a reference to the Jawoyn Association's use of helicopters to gather people together for meetings Ms Mumbin said "Many people say that Jawoyn Association has forgotten its proud traditions and now is just about helicopters and money. They have to pay people \$250 each to go to their meetings. They are using helicopters like taxis."

Northern Land Council Chief Executive Officer Kim Hill told the meeting that the Jawoyn Association proposal was little more than a "land grab".

"They want to take over control of almost 80% of the Northern Land Council's region and clearly don't have support for such an ambitious takeover attempt," he said.

