



Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

Mparntwe, Antulye & Irlpme Estate Groups – Native Title Holders for Alice Springs

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Statement from Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation

Lhere Artepe as the representative body for the traditional owners of Alice Springs welcomes the visit by the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to our country today.

We urge the Prime Minister to look deeply at the issues that plague Central Australia.

If he looks properly he will see that the current crisis in Alice Springs arises from the chronic and systemic neglect of our remote communities over many decades. He will see things that should shame our nation, the Parliament and its elected representatives.

As Territory Police Commissioner Jamie Chalker said today: “there is something inherently broken at the front end” and that you cannot “police away” the problems. What Commissioner Chalker knows is that it is the long term failure of government policy in remote Australia which is seeing the destruction of remote communities by under-investment, lack of government attention and a non-existent economic base all of which has led to the flight of individuals on to the streets of Alice Springs.

The men, women and children on the streets of Alice Springs are rarely Arrernte people. They are almost all from bush communities where they live in Third World conditions with no future and little hope. They choose to be on the streets as life is better there than in the crowded, broken and impoverished places that pretend to be Australian towns and communities.

With alcohol available from 10am in pubs and from 2pm in bottle shops in the centre of town and with town camps now free-grogging zones, the situation is truly out of control, and has been for many years.

The Arrernte people are pained that we do not have the capacity to help our brothers and sisters, many of whom are related to us by kin and ceremony. We

are hurt by the negative images and stereotyping of all Aboriginal people. We are harmed by the violence and alcohol abuse in our midst.

These problems cannot be talked away. They are real and require a massive undertaking from all stakeholders.

We urge the Prime Minister and Chief Minister to work with us as the traditional owners of Alice Springs and help us turn the tide with serious action.

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