



Social Policy Connections Statement of Support for the Yolngu Nations Assembly regarding the Stronger Futures Legislation

Social Policy Connections (SPC) is an independent, ecumenical, non-profit organisation, motivated and informed by Christian social thinking. Our aim is to expand awareness in Australia of social justice issues, as well as to influence public policy-nationally and globally-for the benefit of all, especially the most disadvantaged.

Given our vision is for a fairer society where all Australians can share equitably in the prosperity of our land, we are committed to seeing disadvantaged communities raised up to enjoy greater wellbeing.

We are disappointed that the *Stronger Futures legislation* has not taken account of the concerns raised by the Yolngu Nations. The important principle of self-determination which underpinned much of the reconciliation work of the past two decades is eroded when the Indigenous voice is not respected and acted upon.

Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians must work together to achieve solutions in partnership. Imposing legislative changes without adequate consultation or acknowledgement of concerns will not achieve enduring and effective outcomes.

Key messages that were raised by Northern Territory Indigenous communities but which were disregarded were the desire for the return of community control to the people and for self determination to be re-established. This failure to hear the voice of some, particularly those who have faced human rights abuses, diminishes us as a whole community.

We urge the Federal Government to abandon the *Stronger Futures Legislation* and instead, commit to a more meaningful partnership with Indigenous people to create change that will sustain and enable better lives for many generations to come.

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