

# GUNDJEIHMI

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



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**Media Statement – 23 November 2012**

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## **Kakadu yellowcake legacy no blueprint for Queensland**

Traditional owners directly affected by uranium mining in the Northern Territory, the Mirarr people of Kakadu, have rejected suggestions that the Ranger uranium mine provides a model for Queensland to follow and called on others to heed their experience.

Supporters of the LNP's decision to open Queensland to uranium mining, including the Australian Uranium Association head Michael Angwin, have made public claims about the 'excellent' track record of Ranger uranium mine.

"The suggestion that Ranger provides a blueprint for Queensland must be contested," said Justin O'Brien, executive officer of Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, the organisation established and operated by the Mirarr to represent their rights and interests.

The Mirarr, traditional owners of lands in the Kakadu region, including the Ranger and Jabiluka uranium deposits, have the longest lived experience of uranium mining in Australia. The Ranger mine was imposed on Mirarr against their strong opposition and has been operating for 30 years.

"Despite three decades of mining royalties, the socioeconomic standing of local Indigenous people remains below that of the NT average and well below the national standard. It is only in very recent years that income from Ranger has been adequately invested in social and cultural development programs," Mr O'Brien said.

"The suggestion that Ranger's track record confirms the high environmental standard of Australia's uranium mining industry is in stark contrast to the Mirarr experience of mining on their land. Water and tailings management at the mine continue to cause serious concerns and what environmental gains we have secured have been hard fought for over decades.

"In addition, the Mirarr hold grave concerns about the legacy of uranium mining as well as the impact of its products. The fact that Australian uranium was in the failed reactors at Fukushima that have caused so much damage and human misery remains a source of great sadness for the Mirarr.

"To cite Ranger as a rationale for expanding the uranium industry in Australia is disingenuous," Mr O'Brien concluded.

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Further information: Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation on 08 8979 2200