

## **SENIOR TRADITIONAL OWNER APPEALS TRESPASS CONVICTION**

**February 14, 1999**

Mirrar Senior Traditional Owner, Yvonne Margarula, will appeal her conviction for trespassing on her own land in the Northern Territory Supreme Court on Monday February 15.

Ms Margarula and three other Aboriginal co-defendants were convicted in the Darwin Magistrates' Court in September last year in relation to a peaceful protest conducted in May 1998 on the Jabiluka Mineral Lease.

Executive Officer of the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation, Jacqui Katona, said:

"This appeal is a landmark case for the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act*.

"The Magistrate found that peaceful protest by a Senior Traditional Owner was not the exercise of a traditional right otherwise permitted on Aboriginal land covered by the Jabiluka Lease.

"Any ruling which prohibits traditional owners from using contemporary means to protect their country will undermine the foundation of land rights in the Northern Territory."

For more information contact Jacqui Katona on (0417) 814470.