

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Ligue internationale des femmes pour la paix et la liberté
Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad
Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit

Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO

Special Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO and UNICEF
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28 May 2008

Hon Martin Ferguson MP
Minister for Resources and Energy
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

**Re: Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005
and the 2006 Amendment**

We write on behalf of the Australian Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

Like many Australians, we were greatly relieved when the ALP won government last November. Indeed, we wrote to a number of your Cabinet colleagues to extend our warmest congratulations on the election victory.

One of the matters which influenced our opposition to the then Howard Government was the Howard Government's handling of matters in relation to the control, management and possible siting of a national nuclear waste repository.

We are greatly dismayed therefore to learn that the Rudd Government appears to have reneged on an important election commitment by the ALP concerning these matters.

It is with great dismay that we learn that the ALP voted against the Senate motion introduced by Senator Milne of the Greens in early May this year which called for the repeal of the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005 (CRWMA) and the 2006 amendment.

We understand that the CRWMA 2005 and the 2006 amendment limit or override the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage

Protection Act 1984, and the Native Title Act 1993. The CRWMA would therefore allow the imposition of a nuclear waste repository without the consent of and without due consultation with traditional owners.

These are some of the aspects of the CRWMA about which our organisation has profound concerns.

Because we understood the ALP to have undertaken to ensure that the siting of a nuclear waste repository on Aboriginal land would adhere to the requirements of Aboriginal Land Rights Act, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984, and the Native Title Act 1993, we regard Labor's vote against Senator Milne's motion in the Senate as a broken promise.

It is our sincere hope therefore that the Government will shortly introduce its own legislation to repeal the CRWMA and the 2006 amendment.

Thank you for your kind attention. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Picone and Ruth Russell
Joint National Coordinators

CC.: Senator Christine Milne