

**BARBARA SHAW'S VOICE**

"Firstly I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this country. Secondly a warm welcome to all the Indigenous brothers and sisters from around the world and many thank you to the organisers of this conference and for inviting me to come and speak today.

My name is Barbara Shaw. I am a descendent of the Arrente, Kaytetye, Warlpiri and Waramungu people in the Northern Territory. I live at Mount Nancy Town Camp which is now Prescribed Area under the Federal Government Intervention. I am a proud fourth generation town camper.

I am here today with the full support from my people of prescribed areas. We will be made to hear our voices as we stand together. They will be made to hear our voices as we stand together against Racial Discrimination.

In June 2007 on the emotive pretext of protecting children from sexual abuse the previous Australian Government announced the Northern Territory Emergency Response (The Intervention Legislation) based on special measures for Aboriginal people only living in designated Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory Emergency Response legislation has got 700 pages which was rammed through parliament in a single day which was brought out only into prescribed areas which had no mention of protecting children from sexual abuse.

The Government of the day suspended the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975 to put in place a legislative policy with punitive measurers that targeted one race of people. The Aboriginal people in prescribed areas are living under the paternalistic control of the Government and the legislation also gives a great amount of power to the Government.

The current Government was (elected November 2007) is still implementing and expanding the Intervention to other Aboriginal Communities. Our people believe that the intent behind the Northern Territory Emergency Response was and is a land grab to secure natural resources and mineral in the national interest of the colonial Australian Government.

There was no proper consultation before the Intervention and there is still no proper consultation with Aboriginal people today. The Intervention has legally taken away our rights to be protected from discrimination; we aren't able to appeal when we are discriminated against. So what is happening to Aboriginal people is wrong and unjust. It's a redesign of assimilated policy of the past.

It saddens me to see the look on my country men and women faces. Aboriginal people who live in Prescribed Areas have mixed feeling about the Intervention. The majority of Aboriginal people are in fact confused, frustrated and most of all they are angry at the way we have to live.

Every time Aboriginal people take two steps forward we also get pushed back ten steps. Therefore we have no idea of the future plans for Aboriginal people, no matter what colour we are, where we live or where we come from.

All Aboriginal people are being stereotyped and demonised. All Aboriginal people are being painted by the same brush with the one colour. All Aboriginal people are jammed between a solid wall and a hard rock.

There have been a lot of complacencies against Aboriginal people and our Communities and that's because of the inadequate peppercorn funding which the Governments fail to assist us in the delivery of services to our communities for our people. For Aboriginal people it has been an ongoing heartache through out the years and it will never stop.

Self governance and self determination is not taken into consideration for our people when it comes to Aboriginal affairs. Aboriginal people are not being listened too, yet again our rights to self determination are taken away and at the end of the day we want our terms and conditions met too. Aboriginal people all have needs and concerns that must be heard.

We all need to combat and deal with all these issues which are important for our people. What Aboriginal People are facing today has in fact gotten worse over the years, we will continue to fight this discriminatory legislation on a local, regional, notional and international level as it is racist, unjust and goes against our basic human rights.

Human Rights was formed in confidence and good faith for all Indigenous people through out the world to endeavour all achievements of the basis human rights for everyone. Human Rights is also the responsibility of the governments. It does not mean taking our land away from us.