

MEDIA RELEASE

The Akngwertnarre (Morris Soak) community is proud to begin the removal of the intervention signs in front of its community on behalf of all Aboriginal communities throughout the whole of the Northern Territory.

The intervention signs were placed on our community by the Government of Australia without any consultation or support from the community.

These signs were degrading and an insult to all Aboriginal people, especially the elders and children.

They were a reminder of the bad mission days and paternalistic policies of past governments.

Today we applaud the Federal and State Governments for listening to community demands for common sense and realization that the intervention signs were a sign of oppression.

The intervention is a policy which was intended to improve the well being and safety of the Aboriginal community. The intervention policy cannot work in its current form and must be scrapped and replaced with a process which is not divisive and racist. It must be replaced with a process that is inclusive and driven jointly by the Aboriginal communities and Governments, and must accept, recognize and include the UN Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Governments say that today is a day of normalization of the Aboriginal communities. This Aboriginal community says this is a day of equalization.

We Aboriginal communities only ask for the same equal services, housing and infrastructure and rights that are enjoyed by all other Australians. We are not asking for any other special rights, favors or conditions.

We ask for all Aboriginal communities around Australia to be given these equal rights.

We applaud the Government for taking this historical step in taking down the old signs, and replacing them with this new sign that will give back recognition and pride to our small community, and to all other communities throughout the Northern Territory as each community put up its own sign that is a reflection of itself.

This sign is our community. It recognizes the traditional, cultural and historical attachment Aboriginal people have with this land. This sign recognizes the continued cultural ties the Arrernte people have to this land, and recognizes all other tribal groups living in the community who have contributed to the strong development of this community.

We recognize the elders and custodians of Akngwertnarre.

We recognize all past elders, leaders and community members of this community.