

Friends of Australian Rock Art Media release



ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Editors, politics reporters, business reporters

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For immediate release



Aboriginal heritage group says Turnbull "like Pontius Pilate" on Burrup rock art

Aboriginal cultural heritage group Friends of Australian Rock Art (FARA) today condemned Federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull's failure to stop Woodside's ongoing destruction of rock art on the Burrup Peninsula.



FARA spokesperson Stephen Bennetts said today that Malcolm Turnbull's decision allows Woodside to continue destroying Ice Age Aboriginal rock art in WA's Pilbara region.

"Turnbull is like Pontius Pilate, washing his hands, while Woodside and the WA government continue to destroy the world's oldest evidence of human artistic and spiritual endeavour."



"Pilate, despite finding Christ not guilty, handed Him over for execution. Turnbull, despite acknowledging the Burrup's 'outstanding National Heritage values', is prepared to hand them over to be destroyed by Woodside."

Mr Bennetts said that approximately 40 pieces of Aboriginal art, some of them several thousand years old, have already been removed by Woodside contractors since January.



"Malcolm Turnbull has been no more effective than his predecessor, Ian Campbell, who refused to Emergency National Heritage list the Burrup last December" said Mr Bennetts.

"When Ian Campbell said he would leave his decision until mid 2007, Woodside took that as a green light to start destroying rock art on Pluto Site A"



"There is every reason to believe that Woodside, with a nudge and a wink from the WA and Federal governments, will continue to vandalise possibly the world's oldest and largest outdoor rock art site."

Mr Bennetts said FARA will continue its global campaign to highlight Australia's failure to respect its international obligation to protect the whole of the Burrup. Protests against the destruction of the Burrup were held in France and Germany earlier this month.



"Minister Turnbull is in breach of the International Convention on Monuments of Significance. Australia loudly condemned the Taliban's destruction of Buddha statues in Afghanistan. The world will condemn Turnbull for his complicity in the destruction of the Burrup."

ENDS

FURTHER RESOURCES

High resolution photographs of Woodside's February 2007 destruction of Burrup rock art:
<http://www.standupfortheburrup.com/Stop.aspx>

Photos of International and Australian 2007 Burrup protests:
<http://www.standupfortheburrup.com/mob/GalleryAll.aspx>

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Move WOODSIDE, not Rock Art !