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Friends of
Australian
Rock Art

C/o Conservation Council of W.A Inc.
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MEDIA RELEASE ... MEDIA RELEASE

Attention: Chiefs of Staff, news editors, Indigenous Affairs reporters, business reporters, environment reporters.

For release on Sunday 3 June 2007

Malcolm Fraser supports Burrup rock art campaign

Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser today criticised Australian governments and industry over the destruction of Aboriginal rock art at the Burrup, in Western Australia's Pilbara region.

The rock art at the Burrup, 1600 kilometres north of Perth, is amongst the oldest in the world. Experts believe that some of the art is at least 30,000 years old, and that it may include the oldest representation of the human face.

An estimated 500,000 pieces of rock art are on the Burrup peninsula. Oil and gas giant Woodside plans to build a \$10 billion LNG plant there, and has already removed some of the art. Woodside plans to remove more art in the coming months.

A federal government report leaked this week confirms that the art will be threatened by corrosive fumes from Woodside's proposed plant.

Mr Fraser said that it was a mistake to think that industrial development in the northwest required using the Burrup. The former Prime Minister said that Woodside could locate its LNG plant at Onslow, where BHP-Billiton already plans to locate an LNG facility.

Mr Fraser's statements were made in support of the Global "Stand Up for the Burrup" campaign which has seen more than 20 international protests at places including Paris, Rome, Rio De Janeiro, and New York.

Defending Australia's Ancient Cultural Heritage
www.standupfortheburrup.com



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Robert Bednarik, Convener of the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations, said that the Dampier Rock Art Precinct is Australia's largest cultural monument, the equivalent of a hundred Stonehenges, and one of the finest sacred sites in the world.

Mr Bednarik said that Australia was quick to condemn the destruction by the Taliban of the giant Buddhas in Afghanistan, but failed to see that the Burrup was a much more important part of the world's heritage.

"There is only one reason for this cultural vandalism: the refusal by the W.A. State government, especially Premier Alan Carpenter, to relocate Woodside's plant to a suitable alternative site" said Mr Bednarik.

Peter Schultz, spokesperson for the Perth-based Friends of Australian Rock Art, which has organised the global campaign, said that Woodside's board had not yet committed to building its LNG plant at the Burrup. Mr Schultz said that it is not too late to save the rock art, and that people should lobby the WA and federal governments, and Woodside.

Ends

Information for chiefs of staff, editors and reporters

Media conference and photo opportunity

The Melbourne launch of the Stand Up for the Burrup campaign will be held:

On: Sunday 3 June 2007
Time: 11 a.m.
Venue: Federation Square

FARA members will be wearing T Shirts spelling out the slogan
"Stand Up for the Burrup"

Robert Bednarik, Convener of the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations will launch the campaign

For interview and comment:

Peter Schultz, Sunday 3 June, all day - 08 9295 2572, 0417 675 438
Robert Bednarik - before 10 a.m. - 03 9523 0549, 11 am - 12 0403 169 660
Malcolm Fraser - from Monday 4 June - (03) 9654 1822

For high resolution photos and information, including from the global Stand Up for the Burrup campaign: www.standupfortheburrup.com