

22 June 2021

National recognition of Aboriginal community-controlled councils a step closer

Delegates to the 27th National General Assembly of Local Government have backed moves to give Indigenous Australians a greater say in how they address entrenched disadvantage in their local communities.

A motion put forward by East Arnhem Regional Council to support nationally consistent recognition of Aboriginal controlled councils was carried unanimously at yesterday's session of the NGA.

Djuwalpi Marika, the Deputy President of East Arnhem Regional Council, hailed the unanimous support for the motion, saying it aligns with and further strengthens the recognition of Local Government in the Closing the Gap National Partnership Agreement.

"Council is the arm of the people of East Arnhem Land," he said yesterday.

"We are working to bring empowerment to our Yolngu and Anindilyakwa Yolngu of East Arnhem Land, and look forward to working more with the two 'Balanda' western levels of government."

The successful motion will now be considered by the ALGA Board for adoption as part of its national advocacy platform.

ALGA is already working to promote improved coordination and engagement with local government.

It is a full member of the joint council on Closing the Gap and an active participant in partnership working groups.

It also supports local government representatives engaged in the co-design of the Indigenous Voice which is providing a way for Indigenous Australians to give advice and have input on matters that are important to improve their lives.

ALGA President Linda Scott welcomed the overwhelming support for East Arnhem's motion.

"Indigenous councils are invariably constrained in how they provide adequate services and infrastructure, as they do not have access to resources, including own-source rate revenue.

"Yesterday's motion shows the strong commitment of local government to supporting the very real desire of Indigenous Councils to give their communities life outcomes that are equal to those enjoyed by all Australians," Cr Scott said.

ENDS

Media inquiries:

Dale Keehne, Chief Executive Officer, East Arnhem Regional Council | 0458 039 348.

Cameron Ross | 0418 415 649 | cameron.ross@alga.asn.au