



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA STATEMENT

21/04/2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KLC reasserts position calling for community-led solutions to combat the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody

Response to media articles published March 18, 2021

At the 2020 joint AGMs of Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Aarnja the membership developed the Kooljaman statement, which called for attention to a number of issues, including the over-representation of Aboriginal people in judicial systems.

In 2021 KLC Chair Anthony Watson and CEO Brian Wilkinson travelled to Kimberley towns and met with senior police to identify alternative justice solutions, following calls for community-led solutions to combat the over-representation of Aboriginal people in custody.

On March 3 2021 Mr Wilkinson organised a meeting between KLC leaders and senior executives from WA Police to identify ways to reduce over representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system and in custody. This included discussion of alternative justice strategies.

The KLC strongly refutes recent media reports claiming the KLC called for harsher penalties and for school violence to be treated as a crime at Broome High school.

“The KLC does not condone violence and we have never called for harsher penalties or anything that leads to incarceration of children.” KLC CEO Brian Wilkinson said.

“On the contrary, we have called for that the solution will not be through the justice system. The solution will be a community solution to a community problem in partnership with parents and agencies.”

“In February this year I met with the Principal Matthew Burt to discuss the challenges and how we can work together on education outcomes and challenges for our children. As a result, the KLC was offered the opportunity to sit on the School Board and gratefully accepted this offer.” Mr Wilkinson said.

The KLC has every confidence in Broome High school that Principal Matthew Burke has brought stakeholders together and KLC looks forward to working closely with the school and others to ensure our children receive the best support they can.

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