

QUAKERS WANT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION AS NATION BURNS

Media release 23 January 2013

Australian Quakers have called on the leaders of all political parties, as a matter of urgency, to take the impact of climate change into the upcoming federal election as a key plank of their party's platform for action.

At their annual gathering in Canberra this month, Australian Quakers affirmed that lasting peace can no longer be contemplated in isolation from the significant ecological and environmental challenges facing the world today and in the future.

'The economic and social dislocation from climate change could be comparable to the suffering experienced in war,' stated Julian Robertson, Presiding Clerk of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia.

'For more than 350 years Quakers have opposed war and worked to remove the causes of war. Climate warming could jeopardise stability in Australia, in our region and internationally,' he added.

Quakers have long been known for their strong pacifist stand, their Nobel Peace Prize and their unique observer status at the United Nations. In recognition of the link between peace and environmental concerns, Australian Quakers have established a Peace & Earthcare Office in Canberra, to represent a Quaker voice in the national capital on matters of peace, social justice and environmental concerns.

At their annual gathering, Quakers spoke plainly about their concerns for our future. Many of the Quaker children, teenagers and young adults expressed deep concern that their lives would be permanently and detrimentally affected by the decisions of those in power today.

'The impacts of climate change are arriving much more quickly and are far more severe than forecast,' Julian Robertson said.

'The natural systems Australians depend on for economic security, food and clean water are threatened by climate warming,' he added. 'We believe that continued lethargic responses to these priorities will disrupt our financial and political systems, increase conflict, the isolation of nations and enhance the likelihood of war.'

Contacts: Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia

Julian Robertson, Presiding Clerk, 0428 572 736

Robert Howell, Quaker Peace & Earthcare Office, 0452 534 015

ecpvoice@quakers.org.au