NT Greens are pleased to respond to the Defence White Paper’s question: Are Defence’s policy settings current and accurate?

The NT Greens are a political party with policies and positions based on the principles of grassroots democracy, peace and non-violence, and social and environmental justice. We support a Defence Force that is focused on the defence of Australia, and the development of useful relationships in our region that can be the basis for future peace.

NT Greens recommend two specific priority changes to Australia's defence settings.

First, Australia should audit our defence strategy and foreign policy to ensure that, at every juncture, these remain consistent with Australian ambitions for a world free of nuclear weapons. Australia should disavow any reliance on the USA’s nuclear weapons program; we should end uranium exports to nuclear weapons states that refuse to sign on to or make progress towards the objectives of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We should resume a leadership role in developing and enacting further international agreements against weapons development and towards total global nuclear disarmament.

Secondly, Australia should not tolerate the presence of foreign war bases. While acknowledging the strong friendship Australia enjoys with the USA, NT Greens insist that establishing USA military bases in the NT – irrespective of semantics of co-location and personnel rotation – illustrates that our military alliance with the USA is out of balance. Australia should not be ready to make a blood down-payment on that alliance whenever the USA goes to war, in order to build an expectation that the USA will back us with their nuclear weapons if ever needed. Instead, Australia should have a defence force focused on defending Australia. We should only go to war when it is directly in our national interest, and our strategy should entirely reject any resort to nuclear WMDs.

Australia’s relationship with the USA should be strong enough to allow both countries to enjoy some form of military alliance, without our endorsement of their nuclear weapons program, and without tolerating the presence of foreign bases on Australian soil.

Sincerely,

Owen Gale,
Convenor, NT Greens.