Australian leaders back NT gas pipeline and Indigenous economic reform

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National, state and territory leaders have thrown their support behind a new gas pipeline linking the Northern Territory with the East Coast gas grid.

Chief Minister Adam Giles discussed the project at today’s Council Of Australian Governments meeting in Canberra and won unanimous backing.

“Australia is getting behind this truly nation-building pipeline project which has the potential to secure the country’s energy supply for years to come.

“The eastern states are fast approaching a gas supply crisis and the Territory has the solution. We have the gas and they have the demand but there is currently no economically viable way to get the gas from Northern Australia to the eastern market.

“A pipeline is a win-win that would connect natural gas companies with potential buyers in the eastern states, while also creating economic opportunities for the Northern Territory. It’s exciting to see this project is really gaining momentum.

“Today my fellow leaders expressed their support for the work the Territory is doing to establish a competitive process for the private sector to build and operate a pipeline.

“COAG agreed that connecting the Northern Territory and East Coast gas markets is the next step towards developing a national gas grid and will contribute to the development of a more competitive domestic gas market.”

The Territory is now working with the Federal Government to secure private investment in the pipeline and has received keen interest from a number of key national and international industry players.

“I will be meeting with the Federal Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane over the weekend and I hope to have more to say on this issue next week,” Mr Giles said.

COAG also noted that the Commonwealth, the Northern Territory and Queensland will urgently investigate Indigenous land administration and land use to enable traditional owners to attract private sector investment and finance for development.
“I firmly believe that the protracted and complicated processes for approving development projects on Aboriginal land are prohibiting Indigenous Territorians from pulling themselves out of poverty through economic development,” Mr Giles said

“I am pleased that the Prime Minister has agreed to work with the Northern Territory on ways to remove those barriers to the development of Aboriginal land.”

Communique is attached.

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COAG communique 10 October - 2014.pdf