




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Amrun Bauxite Project

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.49 pm): While the federal LNP government was trying to work out who was going to be their next Prime Minister, or work out who was staying or resigning from the Liberal National Party in Canberra, the Palaszczuk government in Queensland was getting on with the job of delivering for Queenslanders. We are keeping our promise to put Queenslanders first. We know that Queenslanders need strong, stable government. That is why the Palaszczuk government is out there working hard for the people of Queensland and getting results.

On 28 August, the Premier and I visited Rio Tinto's world-class Amrun bauxite project on Cape York Peninsula. The project is about 40 kilometres south of Rio Tinto's existing East Weipa and Andoom mines on Cape York Peninsula in Far North Queensland and involves the construction of a bauxite mine, processing and port facilities.

The Amrun bauxite project is 90 per cent near completion and it was promising to hear about the investment pouring back into the Queensland economy. That means stable jobs for Queenslanders and stable jobs for locals in the Cook electorate. The Amrun bauxite project is worth \$2.6 billion. As the Premier and I learned, Rio Tinto has spent \$2.6 billion with Australian companies, two-thirds of which has been with local Queensland businesses, including \$244 million invested with local Cape York companies. That means jobs and investment for local businesses in my community.

Under Rio Tinto, the mining sector is the largest industry in the Cook electorate. As I have said before, the Cook electorate is not a typical electorate. Owing to the geographical vastness of the region, employment opportunities are more limited in the Cook electorate than they are in other parts of the state. As the member for Cook, I want to see strong, growing industries in my electorate that will support and sustain long-term employment for people throughout the region.

Already with the establishment of this \$2.6 billion project there are more than 1,200 people now working on the site, including 900 Queenslanders, representing 75 per cent of the workforce. One hundred and seventy-eight of those people are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, including 67 local Aboriginal people. This project is clearly a significant boost for the region, as it guarantees jobs not only now but also for decades into the future.

Lastly, I would like to speak of Rio Tinto's great initiative to work in collaboration and partnership with the Wik Waya traditional owners on Cape York. As the Premier said this morning, I, too, would like to pay tribute to Uncle Tony, a traditional owner of the Wik Waya people, for his warm welcome to the Premier and me to his country. As the member for Cook, I felt very honoured to visit this project that will bring huge economic benefit to the region and, in doing so, being culturally welcomed to this country.

It was also reassuring to learn that the business partners with the traditional owners on activities such as working alongside local communities to ensure supportive working environments that promote cross-cultural understanding, cultural camps on country, welcome to country ceremonies for employees, and mine blocks being named in traditional language. It is vitally important to acknowledge and work in partnership with traditional owners who have cared for the land for many thousands of years. In this place, people talk a lot about reconciliation. This is what reconciliation really means: working in collaboration and respect with the traditional owners who have cared for this country for many thousands of years and whom I am sure will continue to do so for thousands of years to come.