

Thursday 24 June 2010

## Unions pledge to work closely with Julia Gillard, acknowledge Labor's achievements under Rudd

Australian unions have pledged to work closely with Julia Gillard as Prime Minister and are united in preventing a return to the Coalition and its disastrous WorkChoices policy.

Unions congratulate Julia Gillard on her election as Australia's first woman Prime Minister.

Commenting on today's leadership change, ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence said unions were totally committed to advancing the interests of working Australians with the Labor Federal Government under Prime Minister Julia Gillard.

"Today, our main task is the same as yesterday.

"We will stay focussed on preventing the Coalition from reintroducing WorkChoices and attacking the rights of Australian workers.

"Unions will continue working with Julia Gillard and the Labor Government to secure the economic recovery and ensure it delivers strong growth in jobs and benefits all Australians.

"We need to press ahead with Labor's economic, tax and social reform agenda, including ensuring mining companies that make super profits are taxed fairly, increasing superannuation for working people to 12% and improving the delivery of health, education, and other important services.

"Together with the Labor Government, unions have helped achieve significant reforms for working Australians in the last three years.

"We have seen an end to WorkChoices, the saving of 200,000 jobs during the global recession, and just last week the historic national paid parental leave scheme.

"We look forward to continuing our constructive relationship with the Federal Government as there is much work still to be done to improve living standards, ensure fairness in workplaces and strengthen the economy after a decade of neglect under the Coalition.

"In her portfolio as Workplace Relations Minister, Ms Gillard has shown a great understanding of the pressures and needs of working Australians and she is clearly committed to advancing their interests.

"We acknowledge the hard work and resolve of Kevin Rudd in winning the 2007 election and carrying Australia through the Global Financial Crisis.

"Kevin Rudd can look proudly on what he achieved as Prime Minister despite the very difficult economic circumstances of the GFC and the ongoing recovery.

"It should not be overlooked that Australia has the best performing economy in the developed world due to the farsighted and decisive action of the Labor Government.

"The national apology to the Stolen Generations was also an historic achievement.

"We cannot put the gains that have been made for working Australians at risk by a return to WorkChoices under Tony Abbott.

"The Liberals under Tony Abbott are opposed to sensible economic management, opposed to fairer taxes, opposed to lifting superannuation, opposed to health and hospital reform, and opposed to national investment in infrastructure, including our schools.

"The Labor Government must defend Australian jobs, protect workers' rights and continue the task of building the nation to improve the lives of all Australians."

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