



Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC)

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A National Apology and National Commitments Still Needed

Ms Muriel Bamblett, AM, Chairperson of SNAICC, said today, 'It is shameful that ten years after the *Bringing Them Home Report* was released, the Stolen Generations are still waiting to hear 'Sorry' from Prime Minister Howard.'

'A greater injury to the Stolen Generations,' she said, 'is their anguish at seeing the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the child protection system continue.'

'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are six times more likely to be placed in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children. Our communities are hurting, our families are in pain, and our children are still being taken away at unacceptable levels,' Ms Bamblett said.

For this year's federal elections, SNAICC calls on all political parties to make key commitments to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. 'Make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's needs a priority at this election – and every year,' Ms Bamblett said.

These priorities include a national apology to the Stolen Generations, improving access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to culturally appropriate early childhood education programmes and a National Strategy for child protection and welfare reforms.

'On the tenth anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home Report*'s release, SNAICC renews its call for a national apology that acknowledges the injustices of past child removals, and the ongoing impact of these on the health, happiness, and parenting skills of current generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is a foundation upon which the success of many other initiatives will depend,' Ms Bamblett said.

'We call on the Federal Government to fully implement the recommendations of the *Bringing Them Home Report*, particularly the recommendations for national legislation to coordinate the protection and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally appropriate wellbeing and parenting programmes for our communities, and increased counselling support for the Stolen Generations.'

SNAICC, the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families, was the first national Indigenous organisation to call for an inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. SNAICC's priorities for the 2007 federal election are online: <http://www.snaicc.asn.au/news/KeyCommitments.html>

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