



November 29, 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

Organisations urge NSW government to act on Stolen Generations reparations report

A coalition of NSW organisations has united to call on Premier Mike Baird to act decisively on findings from a NSW Parliamentary inquiry into reparations for survivors of the Stolen Generations in New South Wales.

The coalition, led by the NSW Reconciliation Council, comprises of 18 organisations that made submissions to the Upper House Inquiry, including the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, and the Law Society of NSW. The organisations have written to Premier Baird urging his government to consider and act on key findings from the parliamentary committee's report, which was handed down in June this year.

"The NSW Government must act strongly and decisively to address the findings of this report, which demonstrates that disadvantages currently experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are strongly linked to the history of forced removals of Aboriginal children in this state," said NSW Reconciliation Council Co-Chair, Lindon Coombes.

"How the NSW Government responds to this report, and the actions they then take across the government as a whole, is an opportunity to prove their commitment is as strong as turning points of the past – the 1983 *Aboriginal Land Rights Act*, the Apology to Stolen Generations in 1997 and recognition of Aboriginal people in the NSW Constitution in 2010."

The coalition's letter calls on the government to work in genuine partnership with Stolen Generations survivors in implementing its responses to the report.


The full letter to Premier Baird can be found below.

The full Upper House report can be accessed [here](#).

The following are available for further comment:

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The Hon. Mike Baird MP
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Premier Baird,

RE: REPARATIONS FOR THE STOLEN GENERATIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Following the release of the *Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: "Unfinished business"* Report in June 2016, we call on the NSW Government, under your leadership, to action recommendations made by the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No.3. We understand that a formal response to the Report is due to be released on 23 December 2016.

The Report details the history of forcible removals of Aboriginal children in New South Wales, investigates responses to the 1997 *Bringing them Home Report* and examines a potential reparations framework. The Report places emphasis on overcoming disadvantage linked to these past forcible removals in the areas of education, employment, housing, health, aged care and justice. Only by addressing these will Australia and New South Wales truly reach a state of reconciliation and equality.

The Report has made clear that New South Wales must act with haste to address areas of Aboriginal disadvantage and begin reparations for the members of the Stolen Generation, following other states, such as South Australia, which is in the process of implementing reparations frameworks.

We urge your government to consider and act on key findings from the Report. In particular, we call on the NSW Government to:

- Work in genuine partnership with Stolen Generations survivors in implementing your responses to the Report;
- Be prompt in addressing the legacy of trauma faced by Stolen Generations survivors and the intergenerational trauma of their descendants so individual, family and community healing may begin;
- Allocate sufficient funding to a reparations scheme which acknowledges the high number of removals that took place in New South Wales, and the potential for descendant claims;
- Continue to work alongside Aboriginal communities in New South Wales. This includes ensuring Aboriginal representation on any reparations tribunals;
- Minimise the burden on applicants in proving their claim;
- Provide educational support for schools across New South Wales to enable accurate, informed and considerate teaching about the Stolen Generations and that all resources for these purposes are developed with input from NSW Stolen Generations survivors; and

- Ensure that with the consent of the survivors and their descendants, the history of the Stolen Generations is recorded, remembered and that past wrongdoings of the New South Wales government acknowledged.

The NSW Government should note that the majority of outstanding recommendations from the *Bringing them Home Report* remains a significant and controversial issue for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples, communities and organisations, almost twenty years after the release of the Report.

The NSW Government has a critical and leading role to play in creating a better future for Aboriginal peoples in this state. This future must be one of fairness, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the same outcomes as their non-Indigenous counterparts. Implementing a reparations scheme for Stolen Generations survivors is one vital step towards achieving this.



Lindon Coombes
Co-Chair, NSW
Reconciliation Council




Cecilia Anthony
Co-Chair, NSW
Reconciliation Council



Dr Tiffany McComsey

CEO, Kinchela Boys Home
Aboriginal Corporation



Bonney Djuric
Coordinator & Founder,
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Factory Precinct Memory
Project




Roy Ah-See
Chairperson, NSW
Aboriginal Land Council



**New South Wales
Aboriginal Land Council**



Tim Ireland
CEO, Aboriginal Child, Family
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Secretariat (AbSec)

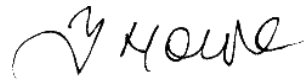




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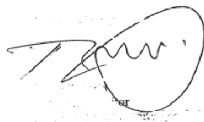
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