

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bipartisan 'Sorry' the only way forward

The Anglican General Synod Public Affairs Commission today supported the Federal Government's proposed apology to the Stolen Generation to be a bipartisan statement issued through the Federal Parliament in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Chair of the Committee, Canon Dr Ray Cleary, said it has been 15 years since Paul Keating's 'Redfern speech' acknowledged the dispossession and oppression of Australia's Indigenous inhabitants and it is timely to reflect upon the healing and reconciliation still needed.

"The Rudd Government's recent pledge to make a formal, national apology is to be affirmed as an important turning-point in non-Indigenous society's relationship-building with Australia's original inhabitants," said Dr Cleary.

"It will have not only a symbolic impact but set the agenda for a fresh start to sharing the rich assets of this nation with all Australians.

"A national, bipartisan 'Sorry' presents a fresh start to reconciliation with Australia's Indigenous people and provides our Federal Government a unique opportunity to redress generations of Aboriginal disadvantage"

Dr Cleary said the entrenched cycles of disadvantage, cultural dislocation and social unrest experienced by Aboriginal Australians are a national responsibility and that a formal apology must also be followed by the implementing of policies aiming to dramatically improve Aboriginal health, welfare and participation.

"Reconciliation is one part of the equation. The other part lies in addressing an ongoing lack of equity in, and adequate access to, quality education and health services, housing and employment."

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