



PRESS STATEMENT

14th March 2008

NATIONAL SORRY DAY COMMITTEE SAYS **“THERE IS HOPE FOR COMPENSATION”**

The National Sorry Day Committee (NSDC) welcomes the Senate’s commendation that the 2008 Stolen Generation Compensation Bill be referred immediately to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee.

The NSDC feels that while Australia waited 11 years for the Apology from the Howard Government, this Inquiry into the Compensation Bill in conjunction with the Parliamentary Apology and the Rudd Government’s pre-election promise to carry out a comprehensive response to the *Bringing them home* report, gives hope that in the future compensation will be delivered to the Stolen Generations.

“Monetary compensation for the Stolen Generations is inevitable and essential to the fair and just resolution of the trauma and damage resulting from the forced removal of children from their families,” NSDC Indigenous Co-Chair Helen Moran said.

Initial research by the NSDC of the 54 Recommendations in *Bringing them home* report shows that 34 of the recommendations address reparations, while 11 of these are specific to the issue of monetary compensation.

The NSDC emphasises the need for a thorough examination of the complex issues involved in the establishment of a compensation scheme and endorses the consideration of schemes already in practice in other countries such as Canada, as a means of establishing best practice.

In addition to making our own submission, the NSDC will be advocating for necessary resources to ensure broad participation by Stolen Generations’ members in the Inquiry.

“These resources should include measures to ensure the safety of Stolen Generations survivors who may not want to disclose their experiences in public, such as hearings in camera. We also need local hearings in regional centres and communities, in addition to capital cities,” Non-Indigenous Co-Chair Sally Fitzpatrick said.

“With the Report due in June 2008, we have a very tight time frame. We need to work together to ensure a fair hearing for all concerned.”

The NSDC is committed to working partnership with both the government and the Senate Committee to successfully implement a comprehensive response to the *Bringing them home* report, and to fully addressing all 54 Recommendations including those that are specific to compensation.

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