



Northern Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

A sorry chapter of NT history closes

25 October 2001

“I warmly congratulate the Northern Territory Government for their apology to the stolen generations,” NLC Chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu said today. “Finally we have had some acknowledgment from our own government of the pain and damage caused by the assimilation policies of yesteryear.”

“I join with Clare Martin and her government in calling on the next Federal Government to similarly acknowledge and apologise for the mistakes of the past.”

“There is no Aboriginal family in the Northern Territory which was not touched by the inhumane policies which involved separating children from their parents. I think all of us who are parents can understand the immense pain and anguish this caused, and why it continues to affect our people today.”

“As a result of these policies, people lost connection with their family, their language and their country.”

“There are so many tragic stories. One man who was taken away from his family as a young boy has told me that his greatest sadness is that he doesn’t know how to be a father to his own children. The inter-generational effects are on-going.”

“The apology serves to help those people who survived the policies to start to move on. Our parliament has recognised and acknowledged their suffering, and this is an important step in addressing the issues.”

“The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s 1997 report on the stolen generations recommended apologies should be made by all parliaments as a sign of recognition and reparation for past wrongs.”

“The only Australian Parliament is now the only one which has not apologised. I look forward to that occurring very soon.