



GRANDMOTHERS AGAINST REMOVALS

MEDIA ALERT - WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2015

“Stolen Generations are worse than ever before”, testify affected Aboriginal Families on Anniversary of National Apology

When: 10am Thursday February 12, 2015

Where: Federal Parliament House room S23

Hosted by Greens Senator Rachel Siewert

Speakers include:

Debra Swan (NSW)

Former Child Protection worker from North-West NSW, who quit after a decade of service, saying Aboriginal child removals are driven by racism.

Karen Fusi (QU)

Aboriginal Grandmother from Brisbane whose daughter committed suicide following the forced removal of her children. Karen successfully appealed to the Federal Court to regain custody of her grandchildren.

Audrey Martin (NT)

Aboriginal Grandmother from Alice Springs, who fought successfully to have grandchildren returned after two years with non-Indigenous carers, leading to a loss of their Warlpiri language and culture.

Vanessa Culbong (WA)

Founder of Grandmothers Against Removals WA, who has advocated for the return of many Nyoongar children removed in shocking circumstances.

To mark the seventh anniversary of the national Apology to Stolen Generations, members of the Grandmothers Against Removals (GMAR) National Committee will provide personal testimonies about the unprecedented crisis of large-scale forced removal of Aboriginal children across Australia.

Despite the silence on child removal in the latest “Closing the Gap” report, new Productivity Commission figures show that more than 15,000 Aboriginal children are currently in “out of home care”. This number is escalating rapidly and is higher than at any point during the Stolen Generations of the 20th Century.

GMAR is preparing for a major rally on February 13, to demand an end to the removals, a national reunification program and Aboriginal control over Aboriginal child welfare. GMAR members led recent protests during morning television coverage of the Liberal leadership spill.

Also available for interview:

Suellyn Tighe (NSW): Grandmother of children removed in a midnight police raid in Coonabarabran.

Albert Hartnett (NSW): Grandfather of a young child forcibly removed by police who has initiated litigation against the Department.

Hazel Collins (NSW): Founder of Grandmothers Against Removals in Gunnedah NSW, where protest action has forced negotiations with the Child Protection Department over the introduction of Aboriginal decision making processes in child welfare.

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<http://www.stopstolengenerations.com.au>