



Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

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**Media Release – Tuesday 17 August 2010 – For Immediate Release**

**SNAICC urges for a better deal for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**

SNAICC Chair Steve Larkins today asked a favour of the major parties in this year's election: A proportionate response to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

"SNAICC is very encouraged by the unity of all parties in committing to constitutional recognition for our peoples and to the National Indigenous Congress," said Mr Larkins. "These are hard won gains made over 40 years since the 1967 referendum that delivered us basic human rights"

"SNAICC urges all politicians to look further for common ground in other human rights such as education, housing and health.

"SNAICC applauds the Government for their unprecedented investment in Aboriginal affairs since coming to office in 2007 and for their willingness to take the long view and make generational commitments beyond the usual 3 year term. Their 2010 policy recommits them to Close the Gap and further tackles family violence and alcohol abuse – both key elements in our children entering the child protection system." said Mr. Larkins

However, SNAICC is disappointed that the ALP has not taken the opportunity to do more to build on their achievements of the past three years. "We would have liked to see a stronger commitment to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in implementing the National Indigenous Reform Agenda," said Mr Larkins. "This means building the capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled sector, of communities, of families and of children and ensuring that all policies are implemented with the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

SNAICC also supports the Greens' whole of government approach that is based on an acknowledgment of self-determination and a willingness to work closely with us to build capacity in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled sector. Further, the Greens have committed to implementing and monitoring the recommendations of many of the comprehensive reports on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody to Little Children Are Sacred. "These reports are not old news for us – many of their recommendations remain unimplemented and ignored" Mr Larkins said.

"SNAICC is very disappointed in the Coalition's failure to commit to the long term Close the Gap priorities. SNAICC believes that the Coalition's policy is based on one model and one viewpoint. However, we know that one size fits all will just not work: Policy needs to take into account the diversity of circumstances, backgrounds and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people," said Mr Larkins.

"I'm even more disturbed by the Coalition's emphasis on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people conforming to the existing education system without a plan to adapt or properly resource the system to meet the needs of Aboriginal families. The only funding for Aboriginal education focuses on truancy and fining families for non-attendance. How can kids go to school if there is no teacher or if the nearest bus stop is 5 kms

away from home? Punishing families for the failures of the system is not on.” said Mr. Larkins

SNAICC has met with all the major parties in the lead up to the election. We believe our election priorities are comprehensive and modestly costed and are a tiny proportion of the overall budget for this nation. SNAICC thinks the 250,000 Aboriginal children deserve a bit better than that.

SNAICC’s election priorities are available at [www.snaicc.asn.au](http://www.snaicc.asn.au)

**Enquiries:**

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