



2 August 2016

SNAICC WELCOMES APPOINTMENT OF ABORIGINAL ROYAL CO-COMMISSIONER MICK GOODA

Melbourne, Australia: SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, Australia’s peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, welcomes the appointment of Mick Gooda as the new co-commissioner for the Royal Commission into the Detention of Children in the Northern Territory.

The revelations last week expose significant concerns about the Government’s approach to and treatment of children in its care. On this basis, and given the strong relationship between the child protection and juvenile justice systems, SNAICC also welcomes the inclusion of both child protection and youth detention in the Terms of Reference. Assessment of treatment against international human rights mechanisms is also critical.

While initially disappointed with the inappropriate appointment of former NT Chief Justice Brian Martin as Royal Commissioner, SNAICC is welcoming of Mr Gooda’s appointment, shared with former Queensland Supreme Court judge Margaret White.

An outstanding and respected Aboriginal leader, Mr Gooda stepped down from his role as Social Justice Commissioner yesterday after almost seven years.

SNAICC CEO Gerry Moore Comments: “Research and common sense shows us that for any program to be effective, it is essential Aboriginal participation is embedded from the outset, and at all times.

“Mick Gooda has always shown a strong commitment to protecting and promoting the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and ensuring a powerful Aboriginal voice is leading the conversation in Aboriginal affairs.

“Furthermore, now appropriate leadership is in place, we recommend a reassessment of the Royal Commission’s Terms of Reference by Aboriginal organisations as a matter of urgency.”

At this stage it is also essential that the Federal and NT Governments commit to the implementation of all recommendations of this inquiry – we need a strong demonstration of political will. Our people have witnessed countless Royal Commissions with little follow through and implementation, including the Bringing Them Home Report. This must be different.

Phone 03 9489 8099 | Fax 03 9489 8044
PO Box 1445, Fitzroy North VIC 3068
info@snaicc.org.au | www.snaicc.org.au



If it is managed correctly, this Royal Commission has the potential to correct horrific wrongs in the NT, and be a genuine example of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnership with the Australian government.

On this front, SNAICC also supports [Change The Record's](#) call for the urgent ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT).

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SNAICC– National Voice for our Children is the national non-government peak body representing the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

Founded in 1981, SNAICC was established to engage in activities that promote and accommodate a strong voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

Over the past 30 years SNAICC's efforts have resulted in many key milestones and achievements both in policy developments at state, territory and federal levels and in developing innovative and useful resources for the sector.

SNAICC is governed by an influential National Executive made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled children and families' services.