Statement from The Gathering 2026 – the biennial meeting of Stolen Generations Organisations

12 November 2026

More than 100 representatives of Stolen Generations Organisations from across Australia have come together on Kaurna Country in Adelaide for The Gathering 2026, united by a shared commitment to truth, healing, justice and self-determination for Stolen Generations survivors and their descendants.

We honour the strength, knowledge and leadership of Stolen Generations survivors. Our organisations were born from the activism of survivors who fought for recognition, reunification and justice, and survivors remain at the centre of everything we do.

For decades, our organisations have done the important work of reunification, records, redress, education, commemoration and healing, work made necessary by more than a century of racist policies designed to disempower and disenfranchise our communities through the forced removal of our children.

We are set to mark the 30th anniversary next year of the landmark *Bringing them home* report, which set out a series of recommendations that framed a systematic response to the ongoing harms caused. Most of these are yet to be addressed.

It has been clear from our discussions that the challenges faced by Stolen Generations survivors are those of a fragmented and unresponsive system. This also impacts descendants of Stolen Generations survivors who make up almost half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Many struggle to access records, they face inequitable redress systems or, in Queensland, no redress at all. Others are ageing without the culturally safe support they need, despite carrying the lifelong impacts of trauma.

A common thread was that our organisations, often led by small teams of volunteers and survivors, are stretched to their limits in trying to provide the critical service supports for ageing Stolen Generations survivors. Some are faced with closure.

We recognised that the story of the Stolen Generations did not end with previous generations but remains a lived reality for many today. Children are still being removed from their communities, and young people are navigating the ongoing impacts of intergenerational trauma. At the same time, descendants want to play a meaningful role in shaping the future. They are seeking pathways to engage, develop careers, and become the next generation of leaders who will carry the stories, advocacy, healing, and purpose of the Stolen Generations into the years ahead.

Our priorities include:

Redress: We resolved to strongly support the *Still Bringing Them Home* campaign in Queensland calling on the Queensland Government to finally introduce a redress scheme for Stolen Generations. Queensland remains the only jurisdiction in Australia yet to do so. We also urge the South Australian and New South Wales governments to revisit their redress schemes and address inequities and unintended harms.

Health and Aged Care: Stolen Generations survivors and descendants continue to experience significantly poorer health, disability and socio-economic outcomes than the broader population as a direct result of intergenerational trauma, disconnection from family and community and ongoing experiences of disadvantage. Across health, aged care, social and emotional wellbeing, many face barriers to accessing trauma-informed service. Health and aged care systems are complex and many providers lack the workforce capability and specialised supports needed to respond to the complex and intersecting needs. As survivors age, these challenges become increasingly acute, with many requiring specialised supports that recognise the lifelong impacts of forcible removal and institutionalisation. Stolen Generations Organisations play an important role in supporting survivors to navigate these systems and should be supported with adequate resources to provide intergenerational healing to survivors and descendants.

Funding: Funding across the sector needs to be longer-term, consistent, sustainable and flexible, so organisations and communities can plan for the future. The Federal Government's role is critical, but states and territories also need to commit. We make a particular call on the New South Wales Government to provide long-term funding for Stolen Generations Organisations, with those working with survivors of infamous institutions — Bomaderry Children's Home, Cootamundra Girls, and Kinchela Aboriginal Boys Home — set to lose their funding on 30 June 2027. Funding is critical for workforce development to retain staff, build skills, and foster career pathways for long term sustainability.

Truth-telling: Too many Australians think of the Stolen Generations experience as something that belongs to the past, when the impacts of removal continue to be experienced by survivors, their children, grandchildren and communities. Yet jurisdictions across Australia are curtailing Truth-telling processes and opposing efforts to educate our children and the wider public. Truth-telling demands action, and every Australian has a role in ensuring these stories, experiences and ongoing impacts are recognised, understood, and never forgotten.

We call, as we have now for decades, on governments, churches and NGOs and the Australian public at large to respond to the unfinished business of *Bringing them home*. They should start first with the priorities outlined in The Healing Foundation's *From Sorry to Action* plan, which would have a significant impact on Closing the Gap.

As convenor of The Gathering, The Healing Foundation reaffirms its commitment also to working with Stolen Generations Organisations across Australia, providing them with the research, advocacy and policy-making support they need, including tools and resources.

We express our gratitude to the Kaurna People for welcoming us to their Country and for hosting this important gathering. We pay our respects to Stolen Generations survivors and descendants whose strength, advocacy and leadership continue to guide this work.