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### **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Apology 2008 - 2018**

Good Morning Everyone

I would like to acknowledge the Jawoyn, Dagoman and Wardaman people, the traditional owners of the many lands on which we operate. We commit to working respectfully to honour their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to this country where we meet today.

NT Friendship & Support has been a part of the Katherine Community since August 1989. Our beginnings were founded in supporting children with disabilities and their families. This grew to incorporate respite for Bush Kids in 2002 and then on to Out of Home Care one, of the four services we run today.

Unfortunately we currently have no Aboriginal carers, we know that this needs to change and that it cannot be brought about by one way of working we need to work together to support local families and communities to increase aboriginal carers

NT Friendship & support has begun to work on our organisational needs to increase our cultural knowledge and understanding. This year we will be developing our new Strategic Plan for the next three years. An integral part of this will be our first Reconciliation Action Plan We have been working with Maddy Bower and Kylie Stothers on addressing this and we are delighted to say that we will be commencing our Aboriginal Cultural Orientation in March this year.

This orientation is for all staff, board, carers and volunteers of NT Friendship & Support and for us is a journey of recognition, learning and collaboration. Thank you Maddy and Kylie.

Today we commemorate the first National Apology day 10 years ago and today is about Heal our Past and Build our future. We are here today to acknowledge the past, however; wanting to work with you to build the future. To create a working group to respond to the community needs of increasing local carers, kinship carers and working together to build the capacity of Katherine and the future generations.

I am married to a Bartu man of Jigalong. I have witnessed firsthand the generational suffering and trauma caused to his family by the forced removal of his great grandmother and the suffering of his grandfather forced to assimilate and the trauma this caused a family.

On behalf of NT Friendship & Support, its Board members both past and present, its employees, both past and present, its carers, volunteers and members, both past and present

We are Sorry ... for the past trauma caused to Aboriginal people and how the trauma has been passed down generation to generation. We are sorry ... for the forced removal of children, the neglect and suffering and for their loss of their family and culture.

The future is there for us to lay down a new story. We all want the same outcome and to move away from another stolen generation.

I am hoping that the Katherine Region Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation are open to NT Friendship & Support working with you on Building that Future.

Thank You

Stephanie Ransome  
**Executive Officer**