

UN EMRIP GIYC Joint Statement: *Item 9: Future work of the Expert Mechanism, including focus of future thematic studies - Forced Child Removal*

We, the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, urge EMRIP to consider studying the devastating colonial violence still occurring throughout the world in the form of **forced child removal** under the guise of paternalistic welfare legislation.

The current global issue of children being removed from their families is occurring at alarming rates where need based approaches are necessary in order to support individuals, families and communities. There is an urgent concern for the effects of these acts in all the 7 UN Geopolitical regions.

Indigenous children today throughout Australia make up a higher rate than the rate that occurred during the stolen generation and the acts of the past are still continuing now. This stems from past colonial practices where assimilationist policies and legislation have caused the removal of Indigenous children, these practices include the process of forcible removing Indigenous children during 1910-1970 which is known as the Stolen generation. As much as we would like to share this as being a practice of the past, this is in fact a practice of the present.

In New Zealand, Māori children are facing similar issues with policy measures which continue to harm their wellbeing. In 2018, the removal rate for Māori babies was 102 per 10,000 Māori births, compared to 24 per 10,000 births for the rest of the population. This equates to around five Maori babies a week being torn from their mothers.

In Canada, indigenous youth are only 7.7% of the population but represent 50% of children in state care.

As a result of children being placed into state care, this leads to cultural loss of their identity, and again caters to the most alarming structure that exists in society, which is the harm of institutionalization and other harmful occurrences. This is a blatant breach of article 7, section 2 which says that ***“Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and***

security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.”

Furthermore, the process of state intervention into the lives of individuals and families must be critically assessed, as too many of our Indigenous children are going through this system and are becoming statistics towards, homelessness, incarceration, suicide and significant cultural loss.

Thus, we urge EMRIP to focus their thematic study on member states disregard for article 7 section 2 of the declaration.