30 March 2023

Dear —-,

We wish to express our unreserved support for those impacted by forced adoptions in Australia, and our recognition of the immense courage, determination, energy, and grief entailed in coming forward and sharing their experiences. We commend the Australian Government's recognition of past harms and abuses, and the offerings of formal apologies to communities who bear the lifelong impacts of forced family separation. Gillard's formal apology in [1]qqqa0a0aa[00]2013 and Australia's commitment to increased openness of records and provision of support services was closely watched by adoptee communities overseas and in Australia and is viewed by many as an example to which governments around the world should aspire.

Concerns were raised in the lead up to the 2013 National Apology, regarding the lack of acknowledgement of intercountry adoption and adoptees. Ten years later, we urge you to consider whether it is possible to justify viewing intercountry adoption as exempt from the issues identified in domestic adoption practices. Like domestic adoption and its impacts, which were so poignantly articulated in Gillard's Apology, issues of consent, coercion, mistreatment, and stigma surrounding single motherhood are also embedded in intercountry adoption practices.

While there are some safeguards in place, such as the Hague Convention, there are no guarantees that intercountry adoption practices are exempt from the harms identified by the Senate Community Affairs References Committee in 2012. For example, child trafficking has been identified in the cases of Australian intercountry adoptions from Taiwan, India, and Ethiopia. The UN's Joint Statement on Illegal Intercountry Adoptions in 2022 is testament to ongoing concerns around vulnerabilities in the intercountry adoption system and human rights violations.

Responding on behalf of the Australian Prime Minister, a recent letter to Ms Lynelle Long of Intercountry Adoptee Voices, was sent from Tim Crosier (Branch Manager of Children's Policy Branch), advising that the governmen**t is prioritising a focus on preventing and responding to illegal and illicit adoption practices, expatriate adoption and concerns about past ICA practices. This is a welcome and critical development in acknowledging intercountry adoption practices and their impacts. However, Australia has been historically slow in appropriately responding to the victims of these past practices in intercountry adoption and we would like to see Australia commit to investigating intercountry adoption practices with the intention of providing a formal apology and including appropriate remedies, particularly around support to our human right to identity and origin**s.

Our concerns are not limited to a handful of intercountry adoptees. In the years since the 2013 Apology, numerous receiving countries have launched investigations into intercountry adoption including Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, and France – with Norway commencing an investigation in 2023.

On the 10th anniversary of the National Apology for Forced Adoptions, we kindly request that:

- Intercountry adoption no longer be considered separate from Australian adoption more broadly;
- Intercountry adoptees be recognised as facing, along with their domestically adopted peers, struggles with identity, belonging, uncertainty, and loss, which can be painful and lifelong; and
- The Australian government commits to an investigation into intercountry adoption practices given Australia's legal and ethical commitment to ensuring intercountry adoption respects fundamental human rights under the Hague Convention for Intercountry Adoption and the United Nations Conventions: specifically the conventions on the Rights of the Child,

Enforced Disappearances, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, and All forms of Discrimination against Women.

- Where it has been proven that an adoptee was stolen from their country of origin, a redress must be considered, as has been done after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

We ask that you also consider what it means to continue to exclude intercountry adoption from a broader acknowledgment of forced adoptions and the message this sends: that overseas born adoptees and their original families do not face similar challenges, and that our experiences and the community-based knowledge we have patiently and painfully amassed over the years does not matter. At this significant historical juncture, we ask you to consider the impacts of this double standard on us, our siblings, families, partners, and our children, who also inherit the legacy of family separation.

Kind regards,

Australian Intercountry Adoptees

1. Leah Hamilton, adopted from South Korea, residing in Queensland
2. Julie Colbert, adopted from Korea to QLD
3. Dr Indigo Willing, adopted from Vietnam and residing in QLD, Australia. Adjunct Research Fellow, Griffith University. Founder, Adopted Vietnamese International (AVI).
4. Benjamin Kelleher, adopted from Brazil, residing in Queensland
5. Kim Faulkner, adopted from Indonesia, residing in NSW
6. Brooke Arcia, adopted from Sri Lanka to NSW
7. Kisharni Eggleton, adopted from Sri Lanka, NSW, Australia. Founder of Sri Lankan Adoptees in Australia
8. Emma Pham, fostered from Vietnam to NSW in 1973, adopted at 1990
9. Meg O'Shea, adopted from South Korea and residing in NSW, Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
10. Kisani Hayes. Adopted from Sri Lanka, NSW Australia
11. Samara James, adopted from South Korea, living in Sydney, Australia.
12. Michelle Piper, adopted from Korea, residing in NSW, Australia. Committee member of Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG).
13. Damian Rocco, adopted from Vietnam to NSW
14. Linzi Ibrahim, adopted from Sri Lanka, NSW, Australia. Sri Lankan Adoptees Australia group
15. Sara Vidler, adopted from Sri Lanka, Parkes, NSW, Australia
16. Jaya Mather, adopted from Sri Lanka 1983, living in New South Wales Australia
17. Dr Liz Goode, adopted from South Korea, residing in NSW
18. Paula Park, adopted from South Korea to NSW
19. Joel de Carteret, adopted from the Philippines, residing in NSW
20. Dominic Golding, adopted from VietNam, residing in ACT
21. Hannah Brugman, adopted from South Korea, living in ACT, Australia
22. Jai Jaru, adopted from Thailand to South Australia 1981
23. Roopali Gulab Meshram (Paula Karvouniaris) - illicit adoption from Preet Mandir, India, adopted to Adelaide South Australia
24. Lalitha Robinson adopted from Sri Lanka to South Australia
25. Sumana Filmer adopted from Sri Lanka to South Australia.
26. Kimbra Smith, illegally adopted from Taiwan, living in South Australia, Australia
27. Hilina Winkenweder, adopted from Ethiopia 2001, living in South Australia
28. Theodora Sullivan, adopted from Greece to SA, founder of Adopted from Greece
29. Kai Hambour, adopted from India to SA
30. Thomas Philp, adopted from Thailand to South Australia. Adelaide.
31. Min Mednis, adopted from Thailand to South Australia
32. Lynelle Long adopted from Vietnam to VIC

33. Ebony Hickey illegally adopted from Haiti to Australia, Victoria.
34. Catherine Robinson, adopted from Malaysia to Victoria Australia
35. Dr Jessica Walton, adopted from South Korea, residing in VIC, committee member of Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
36. Dr Ryan Gustafsson, South Korea, residing in VIC, member of Ibyangin International Network & Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
37. Geetha Keogh, adopted from Sri Lanka, Black Rock VIC, Australia
38. A.Gale, adopted from Vietnam, living in Victoria
39. Jack Hamilton, adopted from South Korea, living in Victoria
40. Mya Ballin, adopted from China to the US, residing in VIC
41. Ché Stevenson, adopted from South Korea to US, residing in Victoria
42. Tia Brown, adopted from South Korea, Perth Western Australia.
43. Carly Reid, adopted from South Korea to Australia, residing in Perth, Western Australia
44. Meseret Cohen, adopted from Ethiopia, WA, Founder of Buna Chat
45. Chae Ryan, adopted from South Korea and living in WA, Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
46. Jasmine Eberhardt, adopted from South Korea to Tasmania
47. Jason Hardy, adopted from Vietnam to NSW, residing in NT
48. David Hopkins, adopted from Sri Lanka to NSW, living in Sydney
49. Leanne Tololeski, adopted from South Korea, residing in Western Australia
50. Kim Catford, adopted from Vietnam, residing in South Australia.
51. Simon Keogh, adopted from Vietnam, residing in Victoria
52. Renee Hanton, adopted from Haiti to VIC
53. Chamila Thrum, adopted from Sri Lanka to Western Australia
54. Mallika Macleod, sold by the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka to WA, 1977
55. Jonas Rasmussen adopted from Haiti to Ballarat Victoria 1989 at the age of 6.
56. Aimee Butler, adopted from Taiwan to TAS
57. Alycia Gawthorne, adopted from South Korea to NSW, residing in Victoria
58. Kimberley Lee, adopted from South Korea to Sydney NSW, age 4 months old

InterCountry Adoptee Voices (ICAV) - Australia wide & International

Ibyangin International Network: Adopted Overseas Koreans Creating Change. Steering committee in Seoul, Melbourne, Montreal, Oregon, Idaho, and Copenhagen (https://www.ibyangin.org/)

<u>Australian Domestic Adoptees</u>

59. Peter Capomolla Moore, domestic adoptee, President Adoptee Rights Australia Inc., NSW.
60. Sean Winter, adopted in NSW in 1971
61. Kyleigh Skeffington adopted in NSW in 1968

62. Pauline Ley, adopted within Australia in 1945
63. Sarah Armstrong, adoptee from the UK, Consultant in Out-of-Home Care, Child Protection and Permanency Planning for children in NSW
64. Michael Grenfell, domestic Australian Adoptee, Member of the Australian Adoption Literary Festival Working Group, Committee member Adoptee Rights Australia, Individual member NSW Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care, NSW Forced Adoption Apology Memorial Consultative Committee
65. Alison Ingram, Adoptee Rights Australia (ARA) Inc., domestic closed record "adoptee", NSW
66. Mato (Erik Spinney) Mixed First Nations, US, Canada. Vietnam war era/60's Scoop sold to Australia for adoption
67. Helen Martin, adopted in SA
68. Dr Penny Zagarelou-Mackieson, adopted in Victoria, Australia in 1963
69. Judy Glover, domestic adoptee Australia, QLD
70. Jane Sliwka, domestic adoptee, adopted within Queensland in 1987, Former Practitioner for Queensland's Forced Adoption Support Service with Jigsaw Queensland & Management Committee Member for Jigsaw Queensland, Former Counsellor and Team Leader for Queensland's State Funded Adoption Support Service
71. Dr Jo-Ann Sparrow, President of Jigsaw Queensland
72. Ryan Dee, adoptee, Perth Western Australia
73. Mark Boulton, adoptee and intercountry adoptive father, Western Australia
74. Jennifer McRae, adoptee advocate Western Australia. Born 1972 Perth, Western Australia.
75. Sharon Pendreigh, adopted in Western Australia, 1977.
76. Teresa tholstrup, adopted Western Australia, 1960

Jigsaw Queensland

Adoptee Rights Australia inc

ADOPTION Jigsaw

Intercountry Adoptees and Other Adoptees worldwide

77. Boon Young Han, co-founder Danish Korean Rights Group (DKRG) and member of Ibyangin International Network, adopted from South Korea, residing in South Korea
78. Mary Bowers, adopted from South Korea to the United States, living in South Korea, Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
79. Peter Møller, co-founder, Danish Korean Rights Group (DKRG), adopted from South Korea, residing in Denmark

80. Sanne Mogensen, 민 들 레, adopted from Seoul, South Korea. Residing in Copenhagen, Denmark
81. Jane Mejdahl, Danish Korean Rights Group, adopted from South Korea, residing in Denmark
82. Nia Kyung Ja Lee Koh, adoptee from Jeju, South Korea, Living in Soeborg, Denmark
83. Professor Eva Ran Hoffmann, Danish Korean Rights Group, adopted from South Korea, residing in Denmark
84. Anja Eun Jin Svenningsen, adopted from South Korea, living in Denmark.
85. Mia Lee Sørensen, adopted from South Korea. Residing in Denmark.
86. kimura byol lemoine, adopted from South Korea to Belgium, Tiohtià:e/KANATA, IbyangIN, Aborigene/Autochones/Afro-descendent/Asian Queer Adoptees, Adoptee Cultural Archives
87. Yung Fierens, co-founder and chairwoman Critical Adoptees Front Europe (CAFE), adopted from South-Korea, residing in Belgium.
88. Salima Kankindi, board member Critical Adoptees Front Europe (CAFE), adopted from Burundi, residing in Belgium.
89. Anke Nirmala Schwertz, board member Critical Adoptees Front Europe (CAFE), adopted from India, residing in Belgium.
90. Renate Aera Van Geel, displaced from South-Korea to Belgium
91. Charlotte Paauwe, board member Critical Adoptees Front Europe (CAFE), adopted from Brazil, residing in The Netherlands.
92. Seung Yup Flikweert, adopted from South Korea, living in The Netherlands, Netherlands Korean Rights Group (NLKRG)
93. Soony Lauf, adopted from South Korea to the Netherlands.
94. Tobias Hübinette, adopted from South Korea, Sweden
95. Pål Nikolai Hagen, adopted from South Korea, Norway (NKRG)
96. Kim Stoker, adopted from South Korea to the US, activist and poet, member of Ibyangin International Network.
97. Cree M. Stevenson, adopted from South Korea residing in US
98. Chaelee Dalton, adopted from South Korea, residing in the United States
99. Tori Grace Nichols, adopted from the Philippines, separated from twin, to United States military bases
100. Mary Ha Eun Bradbury, adopted from South Korea, residing in the United States
101. Linda Carol Trotter, Greek-born adoptee, adopted to the USA, President and Founder, The Eftychia Project
102. Alice Diver, adoptee (Quebec), Lecturer in Law, Queen's University Belfast
103. Gabby Malpas. Transracial adoptee NZ. Artist.
104. Alice MiAe Kim, adopted from South Korea, residing in The Netherlands, secretary of the Netherlands Korean Rights Group (NLKRG)
105. Gregory D. Luce, executive director of Adoptees United Inc. (NGO) and attorney and founder of Adoptee Rights Law Center PLLC (USA)
106. Emmanuelle Hebert, RAIF - associationraif.com/
107. Michaela Dietz, adopted from South Korea to US, residing in US, committee member of Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
108. Robyn Joy Park, adopted from South Korea residing in US, Australia US Korean Rights Group (AUSKRG)
109. Dr. Hanna Sofia Jung Johansson, adopted from South Korea to Sweden, Swedish Korean Adoptees Network (SKAN)
110. Hanna Skagerström, adopted from South Korea to Sweden
111. Benjamin Coz, member of Ibyangin International Network, member of Minnesota Arrowhead Region Transracial Adoptees, adopted from South Korea, residing in South Korea

Critical Adoptees Front Europe - www.c-a-f-e.be

Norwegian Korean Rights Group (NKRG)

Danish Korean Rights Group (DKRG) - www.danishkorean.dk

The Eftychia Project: “Helping Greek Adoptees Find Their Roots”

Swedish Korean Adoptees Network (SKAN)

<u>In solidarity, we also support this letter:</u>

112. Megan Grigg, psychologist, adoptive mother, VIC

113. Soo Jung Elisha Lee, VIC, Australia
114. Sangwon Lee, VIC, Australia
115. Khristine Ryan, adoptive mother, Perth, Western Australia
116. Mala Kennedy, WA, Australia
117. Patricia Fronek, Griffith University, Australia (academic/ researcher), QLD
118. Annita and Richard Pring, adoptive parents, NSW, Australia
119. Fiona Cameron, Sydney NSW - Post Adoption Counsellor and past service manager of a state funded post adoption support service working primarily with adults impacted by adoption
120. Sarah Burn, specialist adoption counsellor, Sydney Australia - previously worked within the Intercountry Adoption Family Support Service (ICAFSS) and the intercountry adoption Tracing Service at ISS Australia.
121. Lenore Marshall, adoptive mother, Sydney, Australia
122. Graeme Marshall, adoptive father, Sydney, Australia
123. Emily McKenna, partner of an intercountry adoptee, Social Worker, VIC, Australia
124. Shurlee Swain, historian of adoption, VIC
125. Gianna Mazzone, Gestalt Psychotherapist, former National Coordinator ICAFSS, VIC
126. Surangika Jayarathne, University of Bern, Switzerland
127. David Smolin, Cumberland Law School, Samford University, United States (academic/researcher and adoptive parent)
128. Ertan Ibrahim, NSW, Australia, Sri Lankan adoptee spouse
129. Adoption Support for Families and Children Inc WA
130. Damon Martin, Deputy CEO (former Manager of ICAFSS and ICA Tracing Service), International Social Service (ISS) Australia
131. Dr Betty Luu, Chairperson of the NSW Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care (COAPC), NSW, Australia
132. Melanie Boulton, adoptive mother, Western Australia
133. Mia Krasenstein, University of Western Australia (International Relations, Law and Politics), friend of adoptee, Western Australia
134. Deborah Vertessy, adoptive mother, Co-founder of Kimchi Club, Clinical Psychologist, Somatic Experiencing Practitioner, Victoria
135. Isabel Andrews for Adoption Jigsaw, Western Australia
136. Beteseb Felega - Ethiopian Adoption Connection (USA) www.ethiopianadoptionconnection.org/
137. Tzu-Wei (Zack) Chen, former intercountry adoption worker
138. Sandi Petersen, former adoption counsellor and intercountry adoption tracing and reunion worker, Adelaide Australia
139. Amy Conley Wright, Academic researcher.
140. Laura Sofía Mora, translations and accompaniment for intercountry adoptees. Colombia
141. Julia Rollings, adoptive mother, ACT
142. Teresa Bolto, adoptive mother, Adelaide, South Australia
143. Allison Lowden, NSW, Australia
144. Robert Cassidy, partner of adoptee who has been illegally adopted, TAS
145. Beverley Dixon, ,domestic adoptee, adopted in Victoria in 1947, now in WA

NSW COMMITTEE ON ADOPTION AND PERMANENT CARE INC