

MEDIA RELEASE

Catholic Church backs PM's call for states and territories to join national child sexual abuse redress scheme



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The Catholic Church has backed Prime Minister Turnbull's call for the states and territories to join the proposed national redress scheme for child sexual abuse survivors.

In a speech to Parliament today Mr Turnbull warned the states and territories to act quickly so a national redress scheme could be set up by July 1 saying "We owe it to survivors not to squander this moment."

Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, said today that now is the time for the state and territory leaders to act.

"The Royal Commission's recommendations for a redress scheme have been with all governments for well over two years," Mr Sullivan said.

"Survivors of abuse have been waiting too long for the scheme to get up and running.

"Many have died never receiving the apologies and the redress that should have been theirs many years ago.

"Catholic Church leaders are on the record saying they will join the Commission's recommended national scheme, now it is time for the states and territories to also sign up," Mr Sullivan said.

One of the significant stumbling blocks in establishing a national scheme has been the constitutional issues associated with the state and territory governments referring power to the Federal government to run the scheme.

Mr Sullivan said that he hoped the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting to be held in Canberra tomorrow would go some way to resolving these problems.

"It is imperative that all governments appreciate the significance of what they will be discussing tomorrow.

"They need to put aside parochial and partisan politics for the greater good of the country and the needs of the tens of thousands of people, many now old and some dying, who were sexually abused as young children."

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