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### Uniting Church congratulates Australia's new Prime Minister

The Uniting Church in Australia has congratulated Australia's first female Prime Minister, Ms Julia Gillard.

Acting President of the Uniting Church National Assembly, Rev. Gregor Henderson, said he welcomed Ms Gillard's election as a major step in Australia's commitment to gender equality and hopes she would serve as a role model for young people to show that Australia really does offer a 'fair go' for all people, regardless of their class, gender or race.

The Uniting Church acknowledges the leadership of Kevin Rudd and congratulates him on the considerable achievements of the Government in the last two and a half years. We particularly acknowledge the apology to the Aboriginal people of the Stolen Generations as a momentous occasion in the formation of the Australian nation.

The Uniting Church has welcomed a more compassionate approach to the treatment of asylum seekers under the leadership of Kevin Rudd and hopes the new Prime Minister will show moral courage on this issue, ensuring that refugees are treated with empathy and kindness and given the opportunity to seek a safe and prosperous future here in Australia.

'The Uniting Church has also welcomed the Rudd Government's commitment to action on social inclusion, climate change, and fairer access to education and health services,' said Rev. Henderson.

'We call on the Gillard Government to continue to strengthen its efforts to create a fairer, more just Australia.'

Ms Gillard has stated her commitment that, 'Every child gets a fair go in life and a good education' and her desire to lead, 'A strong Australia respected as a global force for peace and tolerance.'

The Uniting Church looks forward to a renewed focus on these important issues in the lead up to the Federal Election.

**ENDS**

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