



MCoT's Vision

To Be Central in a Culturally and Linguistically and Religiously Diverse, Tolerant, Inclusive and Multicultural Society.

Aims and Objectives

1. To promote joint action and co-operation among ethnic communities on issues of common concern.
2. Ensure people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds have equal rights, including effective participation in decision-making and sharing of resources.
3. Encourage the development of ethnic organisations and cultural diversity in relation to the social and cultural life of their communities.
4. Foster and promote multicultural education and multiculturalism.
5. Work together for the common good of all Australians and in particular Tasmanians from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds.

Membership

Membership for MCoT is open to all individuals and community organisations that share similar goals and objectives with MCoT, as detailed above.

Annual Membership:

- Individuals \$10.00
- Community Organisations \$30.00

Community organisations need to nominate three (3) members as delegates for their organisation.

Please contact the office on 6231 5067 for the membership form.

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MCoT News

Multicultural Council of Tasmania Newsletter

Promoting Multiculturalism and Harmony in Tasmania

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March 2008

From the Chair

Wednesday 13th February was a momentous day for Australia. The Prime Minister Mr Kevin Rudd said sorry, in Parliament, to the Stolen Generations on behalf of the nation. This gesture signifies the beginning of a healing process in our nation. Australians can now be proud that they belong to a nation that has the courage and conviction to acknowledge the damage inflicted on the Stolen Generations and on the Aboriginal people in general.

We support the Prime Minister's statement that Australia should do it's utmost in ensuring that issues affecting the Aboriginal population such as life expectancy and health, high infant mortality rates, education and economic opportunities (particularly amongst isolated communities) are properly addressed and measures put into place that will actively improve all these situations. We are also encouraged by the Prime Minister's words at the end of his historic speech in which he states "A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed. A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility. A future where

all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country Australia".

Truly inspirational words that fill most Australians with hope for the future.

I would like to remind everyone of the Greek Taverna Night on 15/3 and the Lipscombe Larder Fashion Parade on 28/5. These are the last events of this year's Estia Festival, which from all accounts was a great success. Congratulations to the Greek community, especially those who worked so hard to organise and host the festival and ensure it's success.

Davor Perovic

MCoT Council Meeting
 7.00pm
 19th March 2008

Guest Speaker

Phillip Hoysted
Tasmania Together

The Acacia Room
 Migrant Resource Centre,
 49 Molle Street



The MCoT Office Welcomes Visitors

Office Hours are :

Monday-Thursday

9.30 am - 2.30 pm

Friday

Unattended



Please telephone first to make sure that the office is attended when you plan to drop in.

Racism is man's greatest threat - the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason.

Abraham J Heschel
Jewish theologian
& philosopher
(1907) - 1972)



NB. The newsletter is distributed the week prior to the scheduled council meeting

UPDATES

UNESCO

World Day for Water

The United Nations General Assembly designated 22nd march of each year as the World Day for Water. WDW on 22nd March 2005 marked the start of a new UN International Decade for Action on water. 2005-2015 will give a high profile to implementing water related programmes and the participation of women. The UN hopes that the Decade will boost the chances of achieving the water related goals and the UN Millenium Declaration. This years focus is on *Sanitation*.



The Abel Tasman Art Prize

For pre-tertiary students

The Abel Tasman Art Prize (ATAP) is a biennial art prize, held in alternate years in Tasmania and the Netherlands, open to years 11 and 12 students. The ATAP initiated by the Dutch Australian Society in Tasmania, is a three week trip to the Netherlands.

Abel Tasman was the first European visitor to Tasmania and was born in the Grootegeest municipality which is a co-sponsor, with the Kingborough Council, of this prize.

For more information, go to:
www.kingborough.tas.gov.au

ETHNIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA INC - (AFESA)

At the recent annual general meeting of the Ethnic Schools Association of Tasmania (ESAT) the following people were appointed office bearers for the year 2007 - 2008:

President: **Mahendra Pathik** - Vice President: **Kim Phong**

Secretary : **Emilie Schneider** - Treasurer: **Teodino Ottavi**

Auditor: **Benedict Leung**.

A warm welcome to the re-vamped Croatian School. The school will have multi grades. It is hoped that parents will enable their children to take advantage of the opportunities being offered by the members of ESAT.

ESAT is grateful to the Italian Cultural and Welfare Association for providing a room for the meetings and to Mr Leung for providing professional services.

March Days

- 3 National Day - (*Bulgaria*)
- 6 Independence Day - (*Ghana*)
- 8 **International Women's Day**
- 11 End of Soviet occupation in Lithuania 1990
- 12 National Day - (*Mauritius*)
- 15 National Day - (*Hungary*)
- 20 Independence Day - (*Tunisia*)
- 21 **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**
- Good Friday
- Harmony Day**
- Newroz - (*Persian, Kurd and Baha'i New Year*)
- Independence Day - (*Namibia*)
- 22 **World Day for Water (UNESCO)**
- 23 National Day (*Pakistan*)
- 25 National Day (*Greece*)
- Independence Day - (*Belarus*)
- 26 Independence Day (*Bangladesh*)



International Women's Day is honoured every year on the 8th March, was launched on this day in 1911 in Copenhagen by Clara Zetkin, Leader of the "Women's Office" for the Social Democratic party in Germany. This followed many years of women's campaigning dating back to British MP, John Mill, the first person in Parliament to call for women's right

In just three years time, 2011 will see **IWD's Centenary** - 100 years of women's united action for global equality and change. Organisations throughout the world have already commenced planning for their IWD Centenary celebrations.

On 19th September 1893 New Zealand became the first self-governing nation in the world to give women the vote. In 1908 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and voting rights. 100 years on the pertinence of this event is honoured through IWD's 2008 global theme "**Shaping Progress**". This theme acknowledges the contribution of women in both the paid and volunteer work force.

IWD COLOURS: Purple, green and white are the official international women's colours. The colours originate from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), in the UK in 1908. Many women's groups around the world who understand, respect and choose to honour the history and progress made by the suffragettes use purple as their predominant colour.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21st March. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws". Proclaiming the Day in 1966, the General Assembly called on the international community not only to commemorate that tragedy, but also to work together to combat racism and discrimination. [resolution 2142 \(XXI\)](#)



Harmony Day

Harmony Day, an Australian Government initiative that began in 1999, provides Australians with an opportunity to: think about our community's success as a multicultural society; re-commit to continuing tolerance, goodwill and understanding among all groups; say no to racism. Harmony Day falls on 21 March each year and coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Each year, UNESCO puts together a rich programme to mobilize its diverse partners, with the aim to educate and alert the public of the dangers represented by the current rise of racism, xenophobia and intolerance.

Countering racism and eliminating racial discrimination continues to be at the forefront of the work of the United Nations. Through the work of the UN, international laws have been developed which require countries to work towards the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. These international laws, called treaties or conventions, apply throughout the world. A treaty or convention operates like a contract. When a country, such as Australia, becomes a party to a convention, it is bound in accordance with the rules contained in that convention. Australia is a party to a number of anti-racism conventions, which impose obligations on Australia in regard to racism and racial discrimination in schools and other contexts. In addition to international treaties and conventions, there are several international declarations, which express the international community's aspirations to eliminate racial discrimination. The declarations are statements of principles, which are developed through the UN or other international bodies such as the United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). These international declarations differ from treaties because they do not always impose binding international legal obligations. However, these declarations are morally binding and have much influence over countries in setting acceptable standards of human rights protection.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania (Inc)
49 Molle Street
HOBART TAS 7000

A new lease of life for multicultural Australia

The Australian Government is examining how best to foster and promote the benefits of cultural diversity in the Australian community. The Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services, Laurie Ferguson, said today that as part of this examination he has asked for a review of the community relations program, *Living in Harmony*, which has operated since 1998. Mr Ferguson acknowledged the commitment and hard work of many individuals and organisations in combating racism and promoting the benefits of cultural diversity through the program and on Harmony Day each year. However, he said it is time to take a fresh look at strategies for bringing Australians from all backgrounds together in a positive, productive way. "The government wants to make sure that the program reaches the broadest possible audience, delivers value for money and that those most in need of our help are receiving assistance", Mr Ferguson said. I also want to ensure that the program meets the Australian Government's goal of developing a multicultural Australia in which everyone benefits from the diversity in our society. "We aim to develop a sense of community in which all Australians pull together to secure our future as a socially progressive, fair and united country". Mr Ferguson said the review also included Harmony Day. "I believe we can have a celebration which is more engaging, meaningful and relevant for a greater number of Australians and I have asked the department to explore how this can be achieved", he said. "Australians can look forward to a revitalization of the celebration, and we will keep them informed about a new date and a new image". Mr Ferguson said Harmony Day events would go ahead in March this year, but due to the review, promotional products would not be available.

Source: minister.immi.gov.au/parlsec

Friday 8th February 2008