



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration
and Multicultural Affairs

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Victoria proudly shows its Harmony Day colour

Victorians of all backgrounds and beliefs will celebrate Harmony Day at more than 500 events across the state on Tuesday, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Andrew Robb, said today.

On Harmony Day, March 21, the Victorian Police are leading by example and getting actively involved distributing Harmony Day ribbons and posters at the MCG during the Commonwealth Games - the Games being the ultimate example of harmony at work.

In the north-west, the Melton Shire Council is hosting a cultural fun day at the Caroline Springs Square between 2pm and 5pm with cultural performances and activities for young people.

Leading the way for harmony celebrations at businesses around Melbourne is Spectrum Employment Services in Fitzroy who are transforming their office into a vibrant field of colour with cultural images, diverse cuisine and refreshments combined with live music to add to the atmosphere of a fun, uniting and empowering day.

Mr Robb said Harmony Day was a time to focus on the values that unite Australians rather than on the distractions that so often grabbed newspaper headlines.

"It is a day to celebrate the many steps Australia has taken to free itself from discrimination and racial hatred, but also a day to reflect on the challenges that remain and to renew our commitment to overcoming them," Mr Robb said.

"These values include respect for the rights of the individual, tolerance of differences, a commitment to the country's laws, the equality of men and women and the 'fair go' attitude that is about acceptance, fair play and compassion for those in need.

"These values have served us well and have helped us to successfully settle more than 6.1 million people from some 200 countries since 1945.

"By coming to Australia people commit to Australian values and in return Australia makes a commitment to help people by providing, among other things, educational opportunities that lead to employment so they have a stake in the country's future."

Now in its eighth year, Harmony Day has become Australia's most significant multicultural event and falls on the same day as the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. More than 300 000 Australians of all backgrounds and beliefs will celebrate Harmony Day at 5000 events across the nation.

"I encourage all Australians to join in the Harmony Day festivities and build on our achievements as a prosperous and peaceful nation," Mr Robb said.

For more information of Harmony Day go to www.harmony.gov.au

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