



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Thursday 23 August, 2018

Ms Elizabeth Robertson, Acting Regional Director of Home Affairs for Victoria and Tasmania

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I thank Aunty Di for the warm Welcome to Country and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this afternoon.

That acknowledgement is important. Our Aboriginal communities have lived here and cared for this land for more than 50,000 years. And our contemporary Victorian community can be informed by this history and the wealth of Aboriginal culture, as we forge our State's future together.

Tony and I are very proud to welcome you all to Government House for this Citizenship Ceremony.

As the Governor of Victoria, I feel strongly that Government House – the Governor's home – is a particularly good setting for such a significant occasion.

The Governor is, after all, the guardian of the Victorian Constitution on behalf of the people of Victoria, ensuring that the Parliament acts within its boundaries.

The Governor represents Victorians on ceremonial occasions, and promotes our State's economic, social and cultural connections and interests internationally.

And finally, it is from here that the Governor sets in train work that spans Victoria amongst all its different people, industries, groups and communities, with the opportunity to encourage, facilitate and celebrate our multitude of aspirations and successes.

In welcoming Victorians from every walk of life, this is a place that witnesses the very best of our State's community.

So, it feels so right to me that Government House should also host this ceremony, as we induct 20 of our nation's newest citizens.

Next month, citizenship ceremonies around the country will mark Australian Citizenship Day on 17 September. And that day will begin a year of celebrations, recognising the 70th Anniversary of Australian Citizenship, with the passing of the Nationality and Citizenship Act of 1949.

Almost half of us in Victoria were born overseas or, like me, had one parent born overseas. It makes this State a wonderful portrait of diversity and difference.

Each one of you now forms a part of that picture – although your respective journeys here may have differed markedly.

Some of you may have been here for many years, and already have strong roots in your local communities.

Some little ones may never have known, or might not remember living elsewhere. For you, your only memories are those imparted in the rich heritage of family stories.

For others, your arrival may have been more recent, and you may still be adapting to your new life.

But I am confident that, wherever your journey has already taken you, you have arrived at a common point, now sharing so much with each other: all Australians and Victorians. All

pursuing a safe, good, calm life. Seeking opportunities for yourselves and your families. And enjoying the fruits of our stable democracy.

So, welcome once again to Government House. And welcome to your new role as Australian citizens.

I hope you grow to love this nation and our State as much as I do.

May I leave you with the words of our State's motto. I wish you and your families all the best of both 'peace' and 'prosperity'.

It is now my pleasure to introduce another speaker to you.

I am delighted to be joined by a wonderful young Grade 5 student who is accompanying me today as Mini Governor.

And so, as such, I would welcome her to add just a few of her own words to mine.