



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

VICTORIAN MOSQUE OPEN DAY

Sunday 5 March 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Adel Salman, President of the Islamic Council of Victoria

The Hon. Colin Brooks MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Minister for Housing

John Pesutto MP, Leader of the Opposition

Dr Samantha Ratnam MP, Leader of the Victorian Greens and **Adam Bandt MP**, Leader of the Australian Greens

Councillor Jamal Hakim, representing the Lord Mayor of Melbourne

Vivienne Nguyen AM, Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission

Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are gathering, and I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us. I'd particularly like to thank Uncle Andrew for his warm welcome.

Eight years in this role have given me very privileged insights into how well we do in our multi-cultural State.

I am proud of the harmony and understanding between Victorians of different backgrounds, cultures and religions.

I am grateful for the interfaith work done by so many, including those of you in this room today.

At the same time, I am well aware of the work that continues, and needs to continue, to ensure that we never take our successes for granted.

That we never overlook that there is still more that we can and must do.
We need to be mindful that harmony is always a work in progress.

It is why we, other Victorian leaders and the wider community thank the Islamic Council of Victoria for its vision, and its commitment to Victorian Open Mosque Day. It is why Tony and I feel honoured to attend and contribute in a small way.

Australia is a true melting pot of cultures and religions, from those whose ancestry dates back millennia, to those who will have arrived just this year.

For as long as humans have wandered the earth, they have felt uncertain when confronted by people they've not encountered before. Evolutionists can no doubt explain the hard wiring that motivates us to protect our own. But equally natural to us is that, when we come to know new people, we learn what we have in common.

In this room today, we have people from many different faiths and backgrounds. I have no doubt at all that, wherever we come from and to whomever we pray, we share a commitment to so many fundamentals. To family. To honesty. To being kind. And to what we call, '*a fair go*'.

In co-ordinating the opening of our Mosques, the ICV recognises just that.

We can be grateful that the ICV – alongside many other faith groups – donate so much time and so much energy towards Victoria's *Peace and Prosperity*.

We thank everyone who contributes in this way.