



- MEDIA RELEASE -

SETTLEMENT COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA (SCoA) COMMENDS GOVERNMENT FOR ITS DECISION ON MULTICULTURAL POLICY

SCoA, Australia's peak body for the settlement services sector today welcomes in the strongest possible terms, the government's decision to reaffirm multiculturalism as a critical public policy.

On behalf of SCoA I express the settlement sector's absolute endorsement of this enlightened decision that affirms Australia's multiculturalism in a globalised world.

SCoA believes multiculturalism is a policy that unifies through respect for fundamental human rights of the individual to self-expression; to peaceful participation within a group who share a cultural, religious, national or ethnic identity; and to be fully included in society.

Australia may be highly diverse, but Australians are bound together through a common understanding of these rights and responsibilities. They are bonds that demand a shared respect, allegiance to democratic governance, the rule of law and to individual and civil society.

We commend Minister Bowen on differentiating our Australian society from the multiculturalism practiced in some European countries. This new policy recognizes Australia's unique form of multiculturalism which has developed according to our unique geographic, demographic and socio-economic situation and needs.

SCoA commends the government's initiative of establishing a new permanent, independent and bi-partisan Australian Multicultural Council (AMC), as a commitment to multiculturalism. We are encouraged at the establishment of an umbrella bi-partisan body that will promote a strong and effective settlement service sector and a strong and unified Australia.

Our sector acknowledges Senator Kate Lundy's expanded responsibilities in championing A National Anti-Racism Partnership Strategy and looks forward to assisting Government in furthering these very important initiatives which are in the interests of all Australians.

Cedric Manen

Chairperson

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