



## Australian Bahá'í Community

### Seeing unity in diversity

The Australian Bahá'í Community is pleased to celebrate Harmony Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

It is a foundational principle of the Bahá'í Faith that humanity is a single people, created of the same substance, and sharing the Earth as our common home.

This principle does not deny the immense diversity that exists in human cultures, practices and beliefs. Beyond our oneness as a single species, humanity is infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life, a diversity that enriches us all.

Rather, the principle of the oneness of humanity reminds us that our differences should never be made the basis for discrimination or claims of superiority over others. Every human being is created an equal member of the human family. It is this fundamental equality and unity that we are celebrating today. In the words of the Bahá'í Scriptures:

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land ... (Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words)

Australia is a single community, within which social formations continually grow and develop by interacting with one another in ever-changing patterns of civilisation. The Australian Bahá'í community values multiculturalism as an important stepping-stone on the path towards building a peaceful, just, diverse and unified nation and world.

Living in a society that has welcomed citizens from every country on earth, we all have opportunities every day to build understanding and harmony, removing the barriers of ignorance and prejudice that can blind us to the unity that underlies our diversity.

In our schools and in our workplaces, in our places of worship and on our sporting fields, in our neighbourhoods and even in our families, we can all reach out in friendship to people who are different from ourselves.

Let us seize these opportunities, today and every day. In this process we each have much to offer, and much to learn.

The utterance of God is a lamp, whose light are these words: Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship. (from the Bahá'í Writings)

... the purpose for which mortal men have, from utter nothingness, stepped into the realm of being, is that they may work for the betterment of the world and live together in concord and harmony. (from the Bahá'í Writings)

A statement of the Australian Bahá'í Community for Harmony Day and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

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