




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszcuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MALAYSIA AIRLINES FLIGHT MH17

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.53 am): It is not often that this House has cause to pause and pay its respects to its innocent citizens killed as a result of armed conflict. Today we remember eight people who called Queensland home who died among the 298 passengers and crew on board the Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 passenger jet that was shot down over Ukraine. They were all truly innocent victims who died for motives we do not yet fully know and will surely never fully comprehend.

Anyone reading coverage of the crash would be struck at how many of the Australians killed were returning home from holidays in Europe. They were innocent people, especially the very young children lost, doing a simple, innocent thing many of us do from time to time—coming home. They died in a foreign land apparently as a result of a type of conflict so foreign to our own way of life. Here in Australia we pride ourselves on our ability to embrace the peaceful resolution of conflict. We often forget that not everyone in our world shares what we take for granted. We can sometimes be reminded of that in the most awful way. Such is the case with flight MH17.

Madam Speaker, all Australians have been moved by reports of the loss of so many lives, the loss of people who were mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, sons, daughters, cousins, friends, neighbours or workmates—people their family and friends were looking forward to offering the simple gesture of welcoming back home. Sudden and unexpected loss of life is always difficult to understand and deal with. The events surrounding the downing of this flight have made it especially hard for those who have lost loved ones. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the federal government including Foreign Affairs staff, crash investigators and other authorities for their efforts in dealing with the difficult aftermath of this tragedy.

Today we remember eight people from our state, other Australians and those from other nations whose lives were so brutally cut short. We pay our tributes to them as we consider so many of our fellow Australians, especially the very young children, who have been denied their futures. The thoughts and prayers of all of us in this House are also with the families, friends, colleagues and communities who mourn them. Today we pause to think of those we have lost as well as those burdened with spending the rest of their own lives trying to make sense of a truly senseless act.