



Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**


**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### State of Israel, Diplomatic Relations

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.06 pm): I would like to officially acknowledge the 70th anniversary of Australia's formal diplomatic relationship with the State of Israel and affirm our deep friendship with the people of Israel. This year marks a special occasion between two democratic countries: our own, Australia, and the State of Israel. On 29 January 1949 Australia formally recognised the State of Israel, establishing diplomatic relations between our nations that have lasted 70 years. Israel is a young country, but it has achieved so much. From Nobel Peace Prize winners, world-first discoveries and life-saving technologies to music and the arts, Israel is often referred to as the miracle nation. Our two countries have much in common, from the democratic values we both hold to our pioneering, innovative spirits. These are also values and history that are reflected for us here in Queensland.

Our common history with Israel goes back way before the formal diplomatic relations to World War I when young Queenslanders played a crucial role in the Allied forces' campaign in the Middle East, particularly the legendary Light Horse Brigade that fought in crucial battles against the Turks in Beersheba in Israel. Queensland was also the recipient of holocaust survivors following World War II, many of whom have added greatly to the fabric of our state. I want to acknowledge the contribution of these resilient survivors and their families to the economic and cultural life of Queensland.

In areas such as water, science and innovation, defence industries and many other sectors, Queensland and Israel have been collaborating to solve some of the major challenges facing our state. In fact, just a month or so ago, three of the world's leading water experts from Israel visited Queensland to share ideas and know-how designed to tackle the severe drought using some state-of-the-art technologies developed in Israel. In May it will be a Queenslander, Kate Miller-Heidke, who will be representing Australia in the popular song contest, Eurovision, being held in Tel Aviv.

Our glorious state of Queensland and the miracle State of Israel are connected, not just through friendship but also through a commitment to the rule of law, democracy, multiculturalism and diversity, giving a free press and support for its citizens to innovate. Since 2014, I have had the honour of convening the inaugural Queensland Parliamentary Friends of Israel, a group established in a true bipartisan manner. This group remains active and I thank all those members who participate and encourage all members to interact where they can. The charter of the group includes fostering cultural links and opportunities between Israel and Queensland; encouraging the development of friendly relations and ties between the Queensland parliament and Israel; and enhancing interaction between Queensland and Israel through meetings and discussions with Israel's representatives and the Israeli and Jewish communities in Queensland.

Today I would like to formally acknowledge the 70th anniversary of Australia's diplomatic relations with this highly valued and mutually respectful friend. Given recent events around the world, we need cultural understanding more than ever.