



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**


**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 October 2022

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **African Community Reception**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): The many wonderful African communities that call Queensland home add significantly to our multicultural state. I am proud of and grateful for their significant contribution. There are more than 73,000 Queenslanders who either were born in Africa or have African heritage. I am passionate and deeply committed to promoting the contribution that they make every day to our community in fields including health, research, engineering, business, arts, education and sport.

To highlight this contribution and their rich cultural diversity, the Premier hosted the first ever Premier's African Community Reception at Parliament House with 300 community members this week. It was my privilege and great pleasure to attend and emcee the inaugural event to celebrate and acknowledge the significance of African culture in our multicultural Queensland.

I would like to acknowledge the Queensland African Communities Council's tremendous role in advocating for this event and for their community under the strong leadership of president Beny Bol OAM. Beny's dedication over the years to ensure all Queenslanders of an African background feel safe, welcomed and valued, to calling out racism and the work yet to be done to address discrimination and disengagement, while honouring the strength and beauty and diversity of African culture, has for me—and I know for many others—been truly inspiring.

At the heart of how well people thrive is how they are supported to settle into the community. Having access to a place where they can connect with others, build trust and feel a sense of belonging is crucial. That is why I was honoured to join QACC last month to launch a new African community centre in Geebung. I know another has also opened in Moorooka, and both complement the African Youth Centre at Redbank Plains.

This unique space will be of great cultural and social significance for many Queenslanders from an African background, especially young people. This centre is already being used as a community hub for people of all ages. Young people are using it as a drop-in centre to relax in a safe place or get homework support after school. Mothers' groups are meeting here to build friendships and share stories about their experiences. Community groups are offering employment support or traditional dance and dialect language classes.

The centre is a perfect example of our shared goal, which is to ensure all community members are supported to connect, contribute and belong. I would like to take this opportunity to also acknowledge beautiful Mama Saba Abrahams who, alongside Beny Bol and the Premier, hosted the parliament's African reception this week. Mama Saba, 2022 Queensland Local Hero, has made a tremendous contribution through her social enterprise Mu'ooz welcoming refugees to the Queensland community.

I would like to also particularly acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Toohey who, alongside the Treasurer, is always a fierce and loyal advocate of the African and multicultural communities. Everyone deserves to feel included, and I am deeply committed to ensuring we achieve this outcome by building a truly inclusive society in Queensland.