




Speech By
Hon. Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.36 am): I am delighted to announce that two new members have been appointed to the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council. This further strengthens the council's membership and advocacy for multicultural communities. Mr Prince Long Lo and Ms Cornelia Babbage OAM have extensive experience working in the multicultural sector. Each brings a wealth of knowledge to the role. A Toowoomba resident, Mr Long Lo is a certified practitioner of the Australian Association of Social Workers. He has a background in community development, settlement services, education and the not-for-profit sector. Ms Babbage is based on the Gold Coast and has received a Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to Gold Coast multicultural communities. Her background is in domestic and family violence prevention and in multicultural support services.

The most recent event at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Wakeley, Sydney, underscored for me the necessity for our council. It is a council that brings together leaders from a range of multicultural backgrounds who are deeply immersed in their communities. It is a council that can help inform discussions and reactions to such events. There are Queenslanders who are deeply distressed by what has happened in Sydney. In these challenging times, it is most important for us to come together and support each other. It is only together that we can overcome all forms of hate and violence to ensure everyone can feel safe.

Our new appointments follow my recent meeting with the council in Brisbane. We were joined by representatives from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland Health and the Queensland Human Rights Commission. We spoke about international events that are having an impact right here in Queensland. We tackled the tough topics of hate crimes and serious vilification laws. We spoke about making government services and information more accessible to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Council members come from a range of backgrounds and have extensive experience, networks and links in their communities. They provide advice to me, as the minister, on how our government's services and programs can be more responsive for those from culturally diverse backgrounds. Mr Long Lo told me that, as a young migrant, he knows the challenges of settling into a new country. That is why he is passionate about advocating for the needs of migrants, particularly in regional areas. I also met with Ms Babbage who told me that she was very excited to be joining the council. She has advocated for multicultural communities for the past 25 years and knows the sector intimately.

I have no doubt both Mr Long Lo and Ms Babbage will bring a wealth of knowledge to their roles. It is vital Queenslanders from culturally diverse backgrounds have access to the information, support and services they need to thrive. I am very grateful for the council's support in helping to build a more inclusive, harmonious and unified state.