



Integration: Building Inclusive Societies (IBIS) ***'Diversity, Citizenship and Social Inclusion'***

**UNAOC Forum hosted by
Deakin University's Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation
in partnership with
The Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria**

**Melbourne, 7 October 2011
Melbourne Town Hall**

Forum Summary Report

Table of Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Abstract | 2 |
| Opening Address | 3 |
| First Plenary Panel | 6 |
| Second Plenary Panel | 10 |
| First Breakout Session | 13 |
| Second Breakout Session | 15 |
| Third Breakout Session | 18 |
| Forth Breakout Session | 20 |
| Closing Plenary | 23 |



Abstract

The *Integration: Building Inclusive Societies* (IBIS) Forum brought together representatives from government, business, education, the not for profit sector, and the community, to discuss social inclusion, diversity and citizenship. Specifically, the forum sought to explore current issues relating to multiculturalism, cultural diversity and intercultural relations, with a view to inform policy development.

The event began with an opening address from Dr Jorge Sampaio, who called for increased support for cohesive pluralism and active citizenship, and outlined the major challenges for this goal. Senator Kate Lundy went on to note that the social character of Australia is multicultural, and built upon immigration. This sentiment was repeated by many throughout the day, emphasising the fundamental challenges and importance of social cohesion and inclusiveness.

Discussion in the first plenary panel turned to the challenges and successes of diverse societies. In particular, the panel noted the impact of globalisation upon multiculturalism, and the failure of social inclusion policies to address marginalisation and racism within Australia. Further, the panel highlighted the importance of cross-cultural dialogue as a tool for combating racism and fostering social inclusion.

The second plenary panel focussed upon the specific challenges of interfaith dialogue and social inclusion. The panel commonly raised the fragility of social cohesion, and noted the great impact that all parties, irrespective of size, have upon inter-cultural understanding. By dividing into several breakout groups, the forum sought to address issues of social inclusion in specific contexts, such as education, youth, local government, and the media. These breakout sessions fostered debate regarding the understanding of social inclusion within these contexts, and broadly, the key challenges and responsibilities held by different groups within the community, to develop an inclusive society.

The closing plenary session raised the key aspects of successful multiculturalism and inter-cultural understanding. It was argued that it is vital that cultural diversity and identity are celebrated, and incorporated into the fabric of the host community.

The event proved to be an excellent forum for stimulated and informed debate in the context of social inclusion and intercultural relations.



Opening Address

Chair: **Professor Fethi Mansouri** (*Director, Centre for Citizenship and Globalization, Deakin University*)

Speakers: **Dr Jorge Sampaio** (*UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and the former President of Portugal*)
Senator the Honourable Kate Lundy (*Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs*)
The Hon Nicholas Kotsiras (*Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Victorian Government*)
Mr Sam Afra JP (*Chairperson, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria*)
Professor Jane den Hollander (*Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University*)

Rapporteur: Ms Libby Effenev (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Speaker: **Dr Jorge Sampaio** (*UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and former President of Portugal*)

Dr Sampaio characterised diversity as comprising three integral facets: Rights, Identity and Citizenship. He argued that these factors “are central to multiculturalism and immigration” and encapsulate major challenges to western democracies. Sampaio observed that in Melbourne there are so many “aspects, chapters, projects et cetera dealing with everyday problems” associated with diversity. He understood people’s everyday industriousness as motivation to refresh our vision and update and adapt responses to “problems” of diversity. In this respect, Sampaio is excited to garner an “Australian perspective” to issues of social inclusion.

Sampaio pointed to a need in plural societies to inspire new patterns and policies in order to overcome cultural tensions. He called for stronger support for cohesive pluralism and active citizenship. He outlined two major challenges to such goals:

1. The “decisive challenge is implementation”. That is, how to master the various political, social and cultural tensions that have arisen in the contemporary moment. He views democracy as having a role to play in establishing “citizens as equals in the public sphere”.
2. Intolerance, prejudice and racism must be addressed. Sampaio pointed to discursive aspects of these issues to highlight the nature and scope of this challenge – “We need to look at the meaning behind words, to deconstruct meanings behind them.”



Sampaio stated that in order to achieve good governance of diversity, “First and foremost is the clear need to teach people their right to be protected against cultural racism; the right to protect one’s culture; the right to dignity and respect in all fields; the right to basic well-being and human development.” Dr Sampaio positions UNAOC as an appropriate forum for speaking out about rights. He views “IBIS [as] a hub of strategic partnerships, cohesive pluralism and active citizenship”; all factors that may contribute to progressive forms of multiculturalism. The work of UNAOC should be reinforced with intercultural policies, tools and competencies by local, national and regional actors.

Speaker: *Senator the Honourable Kate Lundy (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Secretary for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs)*

Senator Lundy described the “social character of Australia” as built on immigration and thus multicultural. She observed that Australia exists “in a globalized world of mass migration, [where] multiethnic and multi-faith communities are increasingly the norm.” For Lundy, Australia evolved from “Anglo-origins” to a “vibrant cosmopolitan” society. She highlighted that Australia has strong and effective multicultural and settlement policies, both at federal and state government levels. These are complemented strongly by the work of local governments around the country.

In order to “achieve fairness and inclusion through the government’s approach to multiculturalism”, Senator Lundy pointed to a need ensure national unity, community harmony and the maintenance of democratic values. She has pointed to public awareness, youth engagement, ongoing evaluation, being responsive to intolerance and equitable access to government services (especially for CALD individuals) as key challenges to achieving an inclusive society.

Senator Lundy posited that the good governance of diversity requires the national government “to promote understanding and respond to intolerance, if necessary through law... [and] to highlight the shared rights and responsibilities of all in Australia.” Senator Lundy highlighted the recent Multicultural Policy (released February 16, 2011) as “essential to a cohesive and harmonious future” in Australia. Lundy gave examples of “several important initiatives of the government” that have been formulated through “partnerships and strategies” and “research and consultation” in order to develop coordinated and targeted policies.



Speaker: *Hon Nicholas Kotsiras (Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Victoria)*

Mr Kotsiras stated that the “lived reality” of multiculturalism in Melbourne and Victoria is proof that multiculturalism is alive and well, both at the level of government and within civil society. He said that “the government in Victoria promotes social cohesion by nurturing cultural differences” and this diversity also has economic benefits.

Kotsiras acknowledged that any “inclusive society must be governed by justice, inclusive citizenship and equality and opportunity” and maintained that social inclusion comprised of four main requirements:

1. A need to acknowledge the benefits of diversity and to showcase strengths of diversity in order to unite people.
2. A need to increase capacity for migrant settlement and access to services.
3. A need to rethink notions of citizenship and civic responsibility. He stated that a new form of citizenship should “encourage a sense of belonging and pride in country... [and] move away from National identity models to membership based on civic ideals.”
4. A need to acknowledge ourselves as members of a global family. Kotsiras argued that this is the “major challenge” as it challenges individuals to shore up tensions arising from the dual nature of “identity” (identity as static vs. dynamic). The challenge is for individuals to allow their own culture to evolve AND to incorporate an acceptance and respect of others.

Mr Kotsiras focused on how “interaction” is a fundamental strategy to promote good governance of diversity. He provided examples of state government initiatives that encourage interaction, such as migrants and refugees rights and responsibilities seminars, grants for culturally united events and citizenship education in schools. He argued, “Key to all of this is sincere and quality dialogue” in which partners in intercultural dialogue act on the decisions reached in various meetings.

Speaker: *Mr Sam Afra (Chairperson, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria)*

Mr Afra linked local diversity in Australia to a growing global trend in which cultural diversity has become increasingly visible and thus the global nature of diversity has become a local reality. For Afra, a strong multicultural Australia draws its strength from diversity and that within Australia “Victoria is the capital of multiculturalism”.



The key challenge facing intercultural understanding, according to Afra, is for individuals to learn to agree to disagree. He said, “We, as global citizens, must learn to respect and understand diverse opinions if [we] are to live successfully in the modern world”. Afra then highlighted challenges faced by “new and emerging communities” in the areas of “employment and housing, and the media misrepresentations of these new immigrant communities which contributes to “already strained relations”. He argued for a need to improve media strategies and reporting guidelines so as to promote a commitment “to social cohesion, even in uncertain times”. He noted that, “Multiculturalism should not be a scapegoat when addressing the civic problems we face”.

Afra concluded that the good governance of cultural diversity requires foresight and leadership as we “can’t afford to react to community needs once it has already reached crisis.” Policy must be formulated and delivered “in response to trends, to meet the needs of diverse communities”.

Speaker: ***Professor Jane den Hollander** (Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University)*

Professor den Hollander characterised local diversity as a reality linked to the global context. She pointed to the centrality of the indigenous people to any discussion of diversity in Australia. She said that all in Australia must “remember and honour and remember they have a way of life and wisdom from which we may all learn”

“Ascertaining the different needs of different communities”, according to Professor den Hollander, may be seen as a key challenge to genuine intercultural understanding in Australia. She further noted the “challenges for young people joining the pursuit of education for a better world”. Den Hollander argued that education must orient youth toward a global perspective, thereby addressing “a need to link various localities to the global context”.

Professor den Hollander highlighted the role of the university as a hub in any strategic approach to diversity because it is “a key part for setting the tone on important issues”. Universities are a major contributor to “public knowledge [and the] creation, transmission and application of knowledge to the capacity building of diverse communities”. She argued that universities must have an “eye to the future” in order to fulfil their duty to students and society to “equip youth with skills and knowledge... inspiring capability and confidence”. Universities must function to complement “a commanding aspect of society... the aspiration to do better for children and families – this aspiration is central to building inclusive communities that engender robust and strong societies”.



First Plenary Panel: *Building Inclusive Societies: Challenges and Successes of Diverse Societies*

Chair: Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP (Federal Member for Calwell)

Panellists: **Professor Joe Camilleri** (Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University)
Mr Peter van Vliet (Assistant Secretary, Multicultural Affairs Branch, Department of Immigration and Citizenship [DIAC])
Mr Pino Migliorino (Chairperson, Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia [FECCA])
Professor Paul Morris (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO] Chair of Interreligious Understanding and Relations in New Zealand and the Pacific)

Rapporteur: Dr Alex Naraniecki (Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University)

Speaker: *Professor Paul Morris (UNESCO Chair of Interreligious Understanding and Relations in New Zealand and the Pacific, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)*

Specificities of Local Policy Environment

Professor Morris spoke of the particularities of the New Zealand demographic situation. He gave an overview of the development of the pluralistic policies; most significantly of which was the 1992 adoption of an official biculturalism recognizing three official languages. Morris also spoke of the religious transition which saw New Zealand's Christian population reduce by half. He further spoke of the transformation of the Christian community as a result of the immigration of Catholics from the Philippines, Methodists from Korea and other Asian Christian diaporic group.

Morris referred to the rediscovery of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi as a critical factor in the social change that occurred in New Zealand in the 1970s. Morris also referred to religion as constituting an increasing flashpoint in New Zealand society which requires more thoughtful management in a post-secular social context. Morris also raised the problem of political apathy amongst young people in New Zealand with 12% of young people not even on the electoral register. This political apathy is seen as product of a broader problem of a breakdown of social cohesion, which can be measured by the rise in suicide. Suicide prevention will have to become an increasing social priority.

Morris highlighted the importance of a shared mythology and shared narratives in the management of cultural diversity. He also highlighted the more concrete issue of greater



resources which are needed to be given to settlement programs. Morris mentioned the importance of constant consultation with migrant groups, sceptics and nationalist groups.

In his concluding remarks Morris highlighted the difficulties that governments have in creating social cohesion. The New Zealand government, for example, attempted to promote a unique Somali Muslim identity, but in the process actually created greater tension with the broader Muslim community. Overall, Morris stated that social recognition needed to be linked with economic recognition.

Speaker: *Mr Pino Migliorino (Chairperson, FECCA)*

Migliorino spoke of the need to recognise the impacts of globalisation on the creation of ethnic enclaves. In addition, he argued that the current Australian social inclusion policy is not inclusive at all because it does not incorporate a multicultural policy.

Migliorino, focusing on the particular Australian context, highlighted how some groups are marginalised within particular ethnic communities. He gave the example that within the Vietnamese community drug dealers and users are not viewed as 'being part of our community' by Vietnamese community leaders. This makes it difficult to identify solutions to the social problems when you have tensions within ethnic groups. Also, he argued that we need to challenge the existing social hierarchy and work for greater equity. We should ignore those who use 'cultural relativism' as an excuse to reject both a greater demand for ethnic specific resources and the cultural and political recognition of minorities. Migliorino noted that we have created a dominant "Anglo" culture that has not reconciled the position of indigenous Australians. As a consequence, notions of Australian identity reflect the prevailing exclusionary Anglo culture.

Migliorino referred to the transformative power of equal dialogue and the need to view all cultures as equal. Communities need to take control over their own identities and to reduce cultural racism which occurs by reducing races to stereotypes. We need to establish an equal playing field and transform existing social structures. Social inclusion is all about building spaces between races and cultures in which race is not seen as a primary factor for exclusion. Furthermore, we need to focus on strengthening local and community organisations and develop a multicultural policy premised on a human rights framework.

Speaker: *Mr Peter van Vliet (Assistant Secretary, Multicultural Affairs Branch, DIAC)*

The Assistant Secretary firstly made reference to the fact that 26.8% of Australians are overseas born while the global average is only 3%. He commented on the Labor Government policy document "People of Australia" (2011) to contextualise the failure of



European 'multi-culturalism'. He emphasised the difference between the European and Australian context. van Vliet highlighted that German multiculturalism is not practiced in the same way as Australian multiculturalism and that France has essentially assimilationist policy; Great Britain, on the other hand, has different integrationist policies to Australia. Multiculturalism has thus failed in Europe because of the lack of citizenship and integration policies.

The Assistant Secretary emphasised that Australian multiculturalism is embedded within Australian democracy. In contrast to Pino Migliorino, he saw cultural relativism as a real threat and as something to be avoided and argued that multiculturalism in Australia needs to be seen as intrinsically connected to the Australian democratic and legal framework. van Vliet posited that we need to have well defined multicultural citizenship and settlement policies. Furthermore, he articulated a strongly civil version of multiculturalism, which he believed is different to previous governments. Mr van Vliet presented data which showed that second generation do as well as and sometimes better than longer term Australians which he said pointed to the success of multiculturalism in Australia. Participants were concerned this glossed over the fact that first generation did not do so well but Mr van Vliet said there was some inevitability that some first generation migrants would not do as well as more established and acculturated Australians.

Speaker: *Professor Joe Camilleri (Centre for Dialogue, Latrobe University)*

Professor Camilleri noted the global population movement of around 40 million forcibly displaced people. In 2010, sixty-four countries hosted 500,000 immigrants, while 2.7 million people are moving to developed countries each year. There are also large diaspora movements escaping from conflict. Camilleri also identified the importance of taking into account the specific regional conflicts when discussing cross-cultural dialogue. He noted that we need to find ways of managing groups who do not like to talk to each other because if we don't it risks puncturing the ideal of a cohesive society. Thus there is a need to expand our understanding of inclusiveness to avoid animosities and hostilities.

Camilleri argued the need for greater capacity building for reconciling communities, and further, the need to make advances in the way we engage with new immigrants. Camilleri positioned the need to ensure that integration can occur as smoothly as possible, and also the need to incorporate richer notions of inclusive communities. It was argued that we need to work not just with individuals, but also with communities to establish a closer link between democracy and dialogue. Finally, it was argued that we need to foster a democracy of cultures and lifestyles not just individuals; we need to bring communities into contact with each other.



Second Plenary Panel: *Building Inclusive Societies: Challenges of Interfaith Dialogue and Social Inclusion in Pluralistic Societies*

Chair: **Dr Vince Marotta** (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Panellists: **Professor Andrew Markus** (*Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University*)
Mr Chin Tan (*Chairperson, Victorian Multicultural Commission*)
Emeritus Professor Gary Bouma (*UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations – Asia Pacific*)
Ms Joumanah El Matrah (*Director, Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights*)

Rapporteur: Dr Michele Lobo (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Speaker: **Professor Andrew Markus** (*Centre for Jewish Civilisation, Monash University*)

Professor Markus highlighted the plural nature of Australian society through a statistical description of people born overseas and the rapid population growth. He spoke about the Scanlon Foundation's four surveys on social cohesion (<http://arts.monash.edu.au/mapping-population/scanlon-foundation-surveys.php>) which has produced a body of statistical data on local communities that are diverse and have high immigrant populations. This project attempts to map social cohesion and the key issues in this area relate to belonging and justice. An index of social cohesion has also been formulated which posits five indicators of acceptance and rejection.

Professor Markus claimed, on the basis of the Scanlon Foundation Surveys in Australia that the country performs well in terms of feelings of belonging. In his summary of the data, showed that like Canada people in Australia support immigration and that 30% of people supported targeted programs for ethnic minorities. As a consequence, he concluded that the value of diversity is recognised and endorsed in Australia.

Part of his presentation focused on the lack of clarity we bring to our understanding of diversity. He pointed to the example that "multiculturalism" has several different meanings.

He argued that there is an "attitudinal block in our society" which is evidenced by the prevalence of intolerance and the ongoing volatility of discussions about immigration and cultural diversity. The evidence of discrimination and negative shifts in attitudes towards diversity are worrying and politicians and media reporting as exacerbating these negative trends.



Professor Markus concluded that while there are a lot of positive aspects of diversity in Australia, social cohesion is fragile.

Speaker: Mr Chin Tan (*Chairperson, Victorian Multicultural Commission*)

Specificities of Local policy Environment

Chin Tan began by stating that, “Victorians have always embraced multiculturalism as a way of life rather than just a policy” and believed that multiculturalism is based on shared common democratic values. He added, “Citizenship provides a common hope on which we can hang our collective identities.”

In his presentation Chin Tan argued that the significant challenge is “How to promote harmony and social cohesion in the face of diversity,” whether it be diversity of faith or language.

He observed that the governance of cultural diversity requires people to seek to promote unity through diversity in a culturally appropriate manner. He advocated that the practical policies of government are to be complemented with community harmony programs.

Integral to the good governance of diversity is the creation of a welcoming environment that requires communities to believe in themselves. He pointed to the “Interfaith Network” as an example. This network organises religious trips by local councils (Brimbank City Council). Mr Tan highlighted the importance of initiatives taken by individuals and communities, no matter how small.

Speaker: Emertius Professor Gary Bouma (*UNESCO Chair in Interreligious and Intercultural Relations – Asia Pacific*)

Specificities of Local policy Environment

Professor Bouma noted that the original custodians of the land in Australia encouraged a rich diversity. He argued that multiculturalism is part of our history and our culture. Current approaches to social cohesion, according to Bouma, comprises structures of social control and power which are expressed through a ‘similarity discourse’. At the heart of this similarity discourse is the question of difference. He argued that similarity is not the glue that binds people, instead, “We are held together by interdependence.”

Professor Bouma maintained that there are definite “strategies of exclusion” that are evident in Australia and the most recent one in Australia is the mechanisms underlying “Islamaphobia”. He argued that it is “conflict, withdrawal [and the] vilification of other



religious groups that erodes civil society”. Nonetheless, Bouma noted that both the police and the clergy have a role to play in ameliorating social tensions between groups

For Bouma it is through recognition that people become interdependent and this recognition is important in the management of cultural diversity. He provided the example of an “upskilling course” run by Monash University for clergy as an important initiative aimed at managing conflict. Instead of seeing diversity as a source of conflict, people should celebrate their interdependence. Active strategies such as Iftar dinners where people can mix and talk in a social environment are effective in creating cross-cultural networks. These cross-cultural networks, according to Bouma, are integral in achieving intercultural understanding.

Speaker: *Ms Joumanah El Matrah (Director, Australian Muslim Women’s Centre for Human Rights)*

Key Challenges and Obstacles Facing Intercultural Understanding

Ms El Matrah highlighted how “Social hierarchies and material inequality” are important obstacles to intercultural understanding. Such inequalities engender axes of identity that are exclusionary in nature. A key challenge is to reject any exclusion that “makes you feel worthless and alone” and focus on developing the agency of individuals.

El Matrah argued that challenging exclusive norms required making difficult choices. She identified the idea of “Gender justice” for Muslim women as a case in point. The tension underlying the call for equality for Muslim women is exemplified in treating Muslim women as equals or as faithful Muslims. Thus, she argued that Islam is both liberating and oppressive for women. Overcoming such dilemmas requires “structural and institutional change”. El Matrah identified three issues that may guide us toward such an objective:

1. The recognition of difference in one’s own community and other communities.
2. The desire for gender equality.
3. Acknowledging the work of women overseas because El Matrah stated that “We in Victoria can learn from [what is happening in] Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan.”

In line with her call for developing individual agency as a means of fostering cohesion, El Matrah argues that Muslim women must be empowered. El Matrah believes that ideas of “personal liberty and dignity” are important in empowering women. Furthermore, she argued that “how we practice and how we think are important”. She added that achieving such an aim requires the involvement of hardened activists and a need to address the wellbeing of the community rather than individuals.



Breakout Session One: *Diversity, Citizenship, Identity and Social Inclusion – Celebrating the Work across Education*

Moderators: **Ms Lynn Pickles** (*Manager, Multicultural Education*)
Mr Larry Marshall (*Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University*)

Panellists: **Ms Fran Reddan** (*Principal, Mentone Girls' Grammar School*)
Mr Kevin Pope (*Principal, Meadow Heights Primary School*)
Ms Catherine Devine (*Values Education Coordinator, St Monica's College*)
Mr Mohamed El Rafihi (*Former President, RMIT Muslim Students Association*)

Rapporteur: **Dr Liudmila Kirpitchenko** (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Lynn Pickles, introduced the session by presenting the ideas that shape the education policy in Victoria. She highlighted the increasing diversity students in Victorian classrooms, based on language, culture, religion, and socio-economic background. The main goals for education are to instil in students a strong sense of identity, proficiency of English as an additional language, and prepare young people to be active and informed citizens. Priorities in the Australian curriculum include: Aboriginal histories and cultures, Asia, Australia's relations with Asian countries, Australian engagement in Asia, and cultural sustainability. Pickles argued that intercultural education is needed to develop general capabilities, such as intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour, and creative and critical thinking. An example of intercultural education are the intercultural programs adopted by the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians such as English as an Additional Language and Global Citizenship Education in Victoria. These programs, according to Pickles, serve to ensure contemporary education that builds confidence and self-esteem of young people.

The first speaker **Fran Reddan**, the Principal of Mentone Girl's Grammar School, presented her vision of intercultural education. As the Head of an independent school that offers a personalised approach, Reddan demonstrated that her school emphasised a positive learning culture and strong academic results. The leadership team has a vision for the school to be outward looking, internationally minded and prepare students to be articulate, culturally aware and ethical young leaders. Students are taught to aspire to excellence, make a difference and rise boldly to the challenges of their times. They develop qualities of compassionate leadership and a mindset of continual learning, skills and abilities to move across and between cultures and to possess intercultural knowledge, understanding and



practical skills. This broader mission, noted Reddan, has shaped up the more practical WAVES priorities of Wellbeing (interdependent), Achievement, Values, Enterprise and Success. Students develop a desire to contribute not only to the students' broad education (beyond preparation for tertiary studies), but to their development as remarkable women, who are active contributors to our local community. Main elements of the programs for intercultural understanding at the school are:

1. Social Inclusion Project (working with Sudanese refugees in our local community)
2. A focus on Asia literacy
3. Languages (Japanese, Chinese, French, and German).

The challenges include educating not only students, but also parents and adults in the communities. Reddan observed that there are unexpected challenges to continual learning, especially overcoming Eurocentric views and learning to value all cultures. She concluded may saying that the recognition that changes need to be made have to come from the heart and not by faceless bureaucrats.

Kevin Pope, Principal of the Meadow Heights Primary School, presented a school that services a diverse community. The study body consists of 38% Turkish, 20% Arabic, 18% English, 5% Assyrian, 5% Iraqi, 4% Vietnamese and 19% other ethnicities, overall speaking 25 languages. The school's newsletter is sent out in four languages. About 70% of students live in poverty and close to a third of students come from single-parent families, 70% speak no or very little English when they start school, 25% do not complete kindergarten. While the school offers an environment that understands that students come from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds and caters for linguistic diversity, it caters for diverse learning style. Thus , it promotes the idea that everyone can learn. The school has a good success rate with student from CALD background due to the strategy of 3 R's: Respect, Relationships, and Resources. The school team thrives to provide real and exciting learning opportunities and experiences as well as create an inquiry based learning environment. CALD focused programs and activities for staff include Staff Induction on Cultural Awareness, New Arrivals Program and Refugee Action Plan.

The final speaker, **Catherine Devine**, who is the Values Education Coordinator, St Monica's College, spoke about the results of the Values Education Project. It is a National Framework for providing opportunities for engagement in citizenship education for young people. Following the Cronulla riots, there was a need to commence this initiative and the Project began in 2006. The project provided funding to a cluster of schools that represented a diversity of cultures and backgrounds.. However, Devine noted that it is also essential that the leadership of the schools is committed to the project beyond the funding stage and is ready to commit resources to continue the project. Devine concluded with identifying the



key challenges to the Values Education Project, specifically the existing controversy in defining what constitutes Australian values.

Larry Marshall, from the Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University, shared his experience of being involved in the intercultural education programs where universities work in collaboration with schools. The Centre for Dialogue is administering the Young Muslim Leadership Program whose goal is to empower young people to reach their full potential and develop their intercultural skills. This program consists of six weeks of intercultural training, interactions, dialogues, and field trips to Sydney and Canberra to meet with the government officials. Intercultural Dialogue Project with Muslim women has resulted in a recent jointly written book on Muslim Women’s experiences. Multiple testimonies from the participants of these projects testify to its success.

Mohamed El Rafihi, Former President of the RMIT Muslim Students Association, shared his story on practical implementation of socially inclusive practices that respect identity. El Rafihi noted that after 9/11 the whole Muslim community felt alienated because the wider society adopted “Us” versus “Them” mentality. It led to a period of an identity crisis for Muslim youth. This problem, for El Rafihi, needs to be addressed by the community leaders who have to find the ways to implement socially inclusive practices that lead to educating people about Islam and Muslims. He highlighted the many changes happening in the last decade due to the work conducted by the Islamic organizations, such as ICV, IISNA and others. El Rafihi personally wanted to make a difference when he joined the Islamic Society at RMIT and became its President. The purpose of this association is to foster an Islamic environment for Muslims at University and to allow them to be themselves without being judged or stereotyped. In 2007, RMIT made a commitment to place a Muslim prayer room on the main campus. In 2008, this promise was broken and the Muslim prayer room was turned into the Multifaith Centre. The RMIT Islamic Society effectively lobbied the University, its Student Union, Faith Groups, Government, Foreign Embassies and Media to restore justice. As a result, the Muslim prayer room at RMIT was reopened. In his concluding remarks he addressed the importance of continuing this intercultural work aimed at educating people and fostering better communities that respect differences.

Breakout Session Two: *Youth: Cultural Identity and Hybrid Practices*

Moderators: **Ms Soo-Lin Quek** (*Centre for Multicultural Youth [CMY]*)
Ms Yasmin Hassen (*Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship*)



Panellists: **Ms Nasro Yusef** (*Former member of the Western Young People's Independent Network*)
Ms Sinke Wesho (*Member, Centre for Multicultural Youth Advisory Group*)
Ms Xia Tiligadis (*Youth Diversity Speaker*)
Mr Ali Majokah (*Member, Multifaith Multicultural Youth Network and InterAction Multifaith Youth Network*)

Rapporteur: *Paula Muraca (Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University)*

Breakout Session 2 began with a performance by slam poet Abe Nouk, this work was interwoven with an autobiographical narrative that spoke directly to the session's overarching theme: young peoples' lived experience of forced migration, hybrid identity and belonging. It was a very emotive performance; something that would also be echoed by the four young panellists who followed.

Sinke Wesho of the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CYM), drew on her lived experience of forced migration from Ethiopia to Australia to highlight the positive role that community organisations in the receiving country play in building a sense of belonging among young new migrants. Specifically, Wesho documented the capacity-building function of community organisations in relation to young migrants' scholastic performance *and* social attachments in the host society. Youth programs build networks, and participation in a youth community group proved to boost morale – all of which contribute to a new migrant's ability to engage more effectively with the broader host culture(s). Wesho noted that in the Australian context some social practices and beliefs continue to undermine young migrants' sense of belonging and wellbeing – these areas in need of work are: developing a thicker commitment to intercultural understanding; overcoming cultural stereotypes; the need to recognise and make effective use of different capabilities; and the media's obligation to balance their reporting of migrant youth. Wesho was clear that her experience as a member, and then leader, of a community organisation led her to believe that this work could be achieved through the advocacy, perseverance and individual work of migrant youth.

Nasro Yusof, a former member of the Western Young People's Independent Network (WYPIN) spoke of the settlement issues that confront young migrants in Australia such as inadequate language resources and education, and more severely, homelessness and suicide. A key obstacle to addressing these issues has been the ambivalence of formal government structures to the youth voice. Youth organisations, like WYPIN, work to bridge understanding between local government and migrant youth. By working closely with local government, youth organisations can play a key role in delivering essential social services and 'survival guides' specifically directed to the needs of young new migrants. More



broadly, by listening to the youth voice we learn that young migrants to Australia want to know more about Indigenous Australian culture, history and current concerns, and feel that these topics are largely overlooked in Australian schools; that in Australian society the capacity for intercultural understanding is divided along class lines; that a significant number of young migrants experience intergenerational family conflict that can lead to homelessness; and that interfaith education and discussions are needed earlier in Australian schooling.

Xia Tinigalis spoke next of the urgent need to foster meaningful acceptance and understanding of difference in Australian society. Tinigalis pointed to the assimilationist nature of Australian multiculturalism and its contribution to the everyday Othering of young people understood to be different. This has acute effects on the health and wellbeing of migrant youth, and on the health of Australian society more broadly. According to Tinigalis, 'Australians have forgotten to learn from outsiders'. To bring about change, Australians need to teach each other about their different cultures, reflect on the meanings of multiculturalism and become actively involved in a dialogue about thick social inclusion – and in so doing, '[take] the dialogue back from old men'. Tinigalis emphasised that migrant wellbeing depends on belonging, and social progress depends on the acceptance of *all* identity markers.

Ali Majokah, like preceding panellists, is a member of direct-action youth groups: the Multifaith Multicultural Youth Network and Inter. Action Multifaith Youth Network. These have the specific aim of fostering greater interfaith collaboration and participation in the building and distribution of community services, such as food vans for the homeless, mental illness support meetings and community vegetable gardens. Majokah's address however, was directed at critically examining the way 'migration' is perceived in multicultural policy contexts. Majokah claimed that while mainstream social discourse has at times demonised the idea of the 'refugee', it is also true that the discourse of multiculturalism has idealised the migration experience; overlooking the disempowering and distressing real-life ordeal of much migration – particularly for young people. Diversity, according to Majokah, '...should not be celebrated through the prism of migration'. While it is necessary to have discussions on how best to govern diversity, it is equally, if not more, important to reflect realistically on the causes of displacement and direct policy initiatives toward ameliorating these in the first instance. Dialogue and policy needs to address the intersecting injustices that cause the forced migration of peoples.

Subsequent discussion on key points reaffirmed the value of direct community engagement for strengthening ties of belonging, and for equipping the effective negotiation of hybrid identities among young migrants. Panellists agreed that successfully including young migrants to the Australian multicultural context requires building stronger local community



ties as well as envisaging and applying local policy solutions to the challenges discussed, rather than overarching policy frameworks. Further, panellists confirmed that the very notion of 'multiculturalism' needs to be stretched to Indigenous and Anglo-Australian communities; thereby encouraging greater collaboration among all Australian ethnicities.

Breakout Session Three: *Migration and Social Inclusion: Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity*

Moderator: Ms Kim Webster (*Senior Program Advisor, VicHealth*)

Panellists: Ms Belinda Duarte (*Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Board of Governance*)
Ms Karen Toohey (*CEO, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission*)
Mr David Turnbull (*CEO, City of Whittlesea*)
Ms Dalal Smiley (*Manager, Community Planning, Partnerships and Performance, City of Darebin*)

Rapporteur: Dr Benjamin Isakhan (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Kim Webster welcomed delegates and outlined the key themes of the session: the challenges and facilitators facing local and state governments when dealing with issues of Migration and Social Inclusion. Ms Webster then introduced each of the speakers.

Belinda Duarte began by outlining the roles and responsibilities of Vic Health. Central to this is the need to understand and overcome the inequalities effecting indigenous and people of other backgrounds and their ability to access health services. A core way to address this challenge is to build positive attitudes to diversity in the whole community and social and economic policy that ensures equal access. This "whole of community" response is critical to overcome racism and ambivalence towards cultural diversity.

Vic Health works closely with partner organisations in the promotion of Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD). Key elements of this initiative include: engaging people in the environment in which they live/work; reduce discrimination/intolerance in their 'normal' environment; encouraging strong leadership, collective approaches and the



empowerment of communities. It also includes organising activities across three key levels: individual, organisational, community.

However, there remain several challenges to these initiatives which include: engaging indigenous people and those of culturally diverse backgrounds in a meaningful and respectful way; working with more than just the 'usual suspects'; funding needed to get the elders / community leaders paid for their expertise and leadership (i.e. they should not be volunteers).

Some strategies that work include: capturing the 'hearts and minds' of the communities; raising awareness and removing stereotypes by providing accurate information; promoting positive social norms; increasing organisational accountability; increasing intercultural contact; change must be led by those affected most; building visions and aspirations over the 'long haul'.

James Demetriou focused on his work to get newly arrived young people to participate in Australia's sporting clubs, including those from the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands. He noted that Sport is very important to Australian culture, but that new arrivals find it difficult to penetrate the existing structured sporting environment due to language / cultural difficulties, the timing of sports (Saturday and Sunday), transport, etc. In Mr Demetriou's experience what has worked, to put it simply, is funding. These young people simply cannot afford new sports gear, registration costs, transport fees etc. The biggest hurdle often wasn't culture or language, but money. If government bodies could recognise the significance of encouraging newly arrived young people to play sport – and the positive role it played in promoting diversity – and fund the program accordingly, then Mr Demetriou's program could be even more successful.

David Turnbull noted that local government has a very specific and important role to play in encouraging social inclusion. His city, the City of Whittlesea, was seeing rapid growth and significant change to the already culturally diverse municipality. They were also part of the abovementioned LEAD program which helped to promote diversity and reduce discrimination.

Mr Turnbull noted that when people face discrimination, they cannot reach their potential and become active citizens. He further noted that local government is in many ways in the best position to help people because it is closest to them. He argues however, that local governments need more resources to meet the many challenges they face.



Dalal Smiley began by discussing the notion of ‘Bystander Racism’ – how bystanders respond to racist events and the positive effect that the right type of intervention can have. She also discussed the various reasons why people do not intervene including concerns for their safety, a lack of empathy for the victim and that they do not want to isolate themselves.

Ms Smiley then argued that local government has an important role to play in helping to organise appropriate training to enable people to intervene in racism when they see it in their immediate environment. The City of Darebin has been undergoing a program to train people towards this end.

Karen Toohy began by discussing anti-discrimination law in Victoria which state that it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals in any aspect of their public life. Such a law is an attempt to remove barriers to the full participation of individuals in public life and attempt to encourage equality and inclusion. Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission is taking many pro-active measures to eliminate discrimination in the community and to encourage education on the types and nature of discrimination and the law.

Breakout Session Four: *What is the Media’s Role in Building an Inclusive Society?*

Moderators: Mr Waleed Aly (*Monash University*)

Panellists: Mr Michael Gawenda (*Director, Centre for Advanced Journalism*)
Ms Nasya Behfen (*Lecturer in Journalism, RMIT*)
Mr Paul Cutler (*Director TV & Radio News, SBS*)
Mr Amit Menghani (*Young Victorian of the Year*)
Ms Tanja Dreher (*Lecturer, Media and Communications, University of Wollongong*)

Rapporteur: Dr Yoko Harada (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

A breakout session *What is the media’s role in building an inclusive society?* generated vigorous discussions including several questions and comments from the audience at the end of the session. Having participants all with a deep expertise on the session’s theme but from different backgrounds, the panel represented a variety of perspectives from those who report and examine the media, to those who represent the media.



The moderator Waleed Aly opened up the session by presenting a paradoxical and rather provocative question: “Does the media have a responsibility in building an inclusive society?”. Based on his experience as a prominent editor at *the Age* and by quoting Arthur Miller’s words “[A] good newspaper, I suppose, is a nation talking to itself”, Michael Gawenda posed a question whether the media had a role or not. He added that “inclusiveness” was never an interest to commercial media organisations. That is because the organisations always have their target audience and the issue of representing diversity was not a great concern.

Amit Menghani, on the other hand, was clear that the media definitely had a role to play because people gather information from the media and there is an immense trust in it. The influence of advertisements also should be taken into consideration because it has power to shapes our lives and thus those who read media reports need to be cautious in how they interpret them. Manghani commented that news is becoming more about commentary rather than reflecting investigative journalism. He discussed how he made a major contribution in making the media aware of violent attacks against Indians in Melbourne in 2009. He argued that the audience and readers should be aware about what is fact, what is opinion, and who says what to whom, when engaging with the media.

Menghani then discussed the problem of the newsroom because this is the place where decisions on what to report and how to report are made. He concluded with some observations on SBS and stated that being a multicultural and multilingual broadcasting organisation, the SBS considers inclusiveness as a key factor in the composition of a newsroom.

Paul Cutler told the audience that, at least, the SBS newsroom consisted of staff members who could manage more than two languages. Although there always was a difficulty in putting policies into practice, along with its effort to make sure that the newsroom reflected a diversified environment, he noted that SBS is careful in selecting crowd shots, experts, those who speak from minority communities and also in deciding whether to have English captions or not. However, Cutler also raised a concern that because of SBS’s high reputation as a multicultural broadcaster, it could be discouraging commercial broadcasters to seriously consider its responsibility to create culturally diversified programs because they think it is SBS’s job.

Nasya Behafen expressed the difficulty of sending non-mainstream Australian young people to main media’s newsrooms. She is responsible for educating university students who want to be journalists, in other words, she is at the very starting point of creating a more



multicultural newsroom. Due to the less enthusiasm shown by students from minority communities in becoming journalists and, moreover, the obstacles the educational system places on NESB high school students to enter universities, she believes she faces a great challenge. Behefen also pointed to the problem of a hierarchical structure of broadcasters. It is very difficult for young journalists to oppose the management or be involved in the decision making process regarding what news.

Moreover, Behefen argued that a concerted effort has been made in Australia to have more social inclusive media. He mentioned a few academic research projects in the session. Focusing on the Sudanese community, he refereed two projects which are separately funded by the ARC (“Media Treatment and Communication Needs of Sudanese Australians”) and the Myer Foundation (“Sudanese Australian Media Training Project”). The leaders of the projects are looking into the situation of the media coverage of the Sudanese community in Melbourne. Also, in order to give a voice to the voiceless people, a basic journalism course is provided to the young Sudanese. Behefen noted that the success of these projects have encouraged a similar research on other ethnic groups.

Tanja Dreher also holds an ARC Linkage grants (“Ripple Effects: Ice (Information Cultural Exchange) and cultural Citizenship in Western Sydney”) and working in Western Sydney with the Australian Council, Arts NSW and Information Cultural Exchange (ICE). The project encourages refugee communities to tell their stories which are different from the mainstream ones. Because of the development of the digital media such as You Tube or various blogs, according to Dreher, the task of putting minorities’ voices forward has become easier.

However, Dreher, at the same time, recognised that there will be many challenges in building an inclusive society. Even though the marginal voices were out there and being expressed, the issues is whether ordinary people were listening to them. Although it is the nature of commercial broadcasting bodies to report what the mainstream audience want to watch or hear, for Dreher it is also important that the commercial media provide broadcasting space for minority voices.

Despite the opening statement by the moderator, the outcome of the session clearly presented that the media definitely had a responsibility in building an inclusive society. As Cutler pointed out, the social reality of Australia is that a large proportion of Australians were born overseas or have one of their parents born overseas. This composition of the Australian society should be reflected in the media. As the media is the key source for the public to gain information about its society, there was a consensus that the media has a responsibility to reflect the multicultural and multilingual reality of Australia.



Closing Plenary Session

Chairs: **Professor Fethi Mansouri** (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)
Mr Ross Barnett (Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria)

Panellists: **Mr Waleed Aly** (*Monash University*)
Ms Kim Webster (*Senior Program Advisor, VicHealth*)
Ms Soo-Lin Quek (*Centre for Multicultural Youth*)
Ms Lynn Pickles (*Manager, Multicultural Education*)

Rapporteur: Dr Masa Mikola (*Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University*)

Speaker: **Ms Soo-Lin Quek** (*Centre for Multicultural Youth*)

Soo Lin Quek called for a focus on young people and migration. Ms Quek said that the major challenge of migration should be understood in terms of what migrants leave behind and how they find a place to belong in the new society. She said that community-based organisations, such as the Centre for Multicultural Youth, are well-positioned to give young migrants the capacity to navigate this adjustment. She said that young migrants require sound leadership. Ms Quek also pointed to the importance of school curricula in facilitating positive experiences for young migrants in Australia.

Social Inclusion, according to Ms Quek, requires local solutions to problems. “Multiculturalism is not always about about the ‘usual suspects’”. Issues that are integral to a successful multiculturalism include: Negotiating inter-generational relationships, addressing what it means to be Australian, strong participation in terms of voluntary work.

Speaker: **Ms Lyn Pickles** (*Manager, Multicultural Education*)

Ms Pickles said that education is about celebrating the good work of people and noted that the richness of cultural diversity in Australia is reflected clearly in Australia’s schools. Schools must encourage an appreciation of meaningful dialogue and an appreciation of cultural diversity (eg. having prayer rooms).

According to Ms Pickles, the following are key themes underlying an education that fosters social inclusion:

- the importance of the vision and the mission
- importance of being included
- the autonomy of principals
- the importance of student voices