

MEDIA RELEASE



MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Hon Julie Bishop MP

July 2015

RAMADAN STATEMENT 2015

I share with Muslims in Australia and throughout the world my warmest wishes for the month of Ramadan, together with those of the Australian Government and people.

Ramadan is a time for reflection, community and charity. I hope that all Australians will reflect on the many contributions that Muslims have made to the Australian community – including through the arts, politics, sports and education.

Islam has a long history in Australia: before European settlement, Muslims from Makassar traded with Australia's indigenous people. Within the first decades of Sydney's establishment, Muslims from as far afield as Oman and Bengal were already active in the new town. From the 1860s, Afghan and Indian camel drivers helped build the Overland Telegraph from Adelaide to Darwin, connecting Australia to London and the world.

More than 200 years later, Australia's Muslim community remains diverse, tolerant and inclusive. Respect for one another, tolerance of our differences and celebration of our diversity are our great strengths as a nation. Muslims from all over the world have played an important part in developing Australia and will continue to play an important role in the years and decades ahead.

Ramadan is a time of joy and celebration. It is also a time for remembering those who are less fortunate. Many of Australian Muslims will be thinking of loved ones suffering conflict and unrest in other parts of the world. As a nation, our thoughts are with them and our hope for peace, enduring.

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