

SPECIAL E-NEWS

Auburn GALLIPOLI MOSQUE hosts citizenship ceremony on ANZAC DAY

In a national first, 40 people have pledged their allegiance to Australia as Australian citizens at a very special ceremony on ANZAC Day, April 25th 2007, at Auburn Gallipoli Mosque in Auburn.



Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, the Hon Kevin Andrews said to new Australians, "on behalf of the Australian Government, I offer my warmest congratulations and best wishes for the years ahead."

Assistant Minister for Immigration and Citizenship Theresa Gambaro added the ceremony will compliment ANZAC Day commemorations and pay tribute to the affinity the Turkish community has for its adopted home, "On a day so important in Australia and Turkey, it is very special for these people, many of whom have Turkish ancestry or were born in Turkey, to pledge their allegiance to Australia, their new home."

There were also be people from Brazil, India and Afghanistan becoming citizens during the ceremony.



"This reflects the inclusive nature of the Turkish Muslim community and also the many different cultures that have made the Auburn area their home," said the Assistant Minister.

Mehmet Ozalp, Education & Interfaith Director, Auburn Gallipoli Mosque, and the president of Affinity Intercultural Foundation said, "This event is highly symbolic for not only Turkish Muslims but for the diverse ethnic Muslim congregation of our mosque. Our mosque has actively promoted peace and harmony in our multifaith society in the past. This citizenship ceremony is a testimony to our continued commitment to Australia and its shared values."

The event was attended by government officials, community leaders and members of the mosque congregation over the courtyard shadowed by the glass dome. The Hon Barbara Perry, Minister for Juvenile Justice, Minister for Western Sydney and Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship addressed the audience, "Holding this event is a testimony of the great works Auburn Gallipoli mosque has done to date. I congratulate them and welcome new Australians whoheatedly."

The ceremony started at 12.30pm and finished around 2:00pm followed by an afternoon tea and a tour of the mosque to new Australians and the dignitaries.

