



African Think Tank Inc.

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AFRICAN THINK TANK REJOICES IN AUSTRALIA DAY

Melbourne, Vic:

The member communities of the African Think Tank today looked forward to celebrating Australia Day 2011.

“This is a day of rejoicing and happiness for us all,” said Dr. Berhan Ahmed, Chairperson of the African Think Tank. “Owing to the generosity and acceptance of the wider community in Australia, we can breathe the sweet air of freedom. We can bring up our families without fear. We can educate our children knowing there is opportunity and justice in this, our beloved new home.

“Australia as it is today is a land built by migrants. The first influx of immigrants of non-British origin came with Germans and Chinese during the Gold Rush of 1851. This has been followed at regular intervals by new waves of immigration. Today, more than a quarter of Australian citizens were born in other countries.

“This diversity has given Australia tremendous vitality and strength. It is one reason we weathered the recent depression without severe damage. The diversity of our economy as against the limitations of the White Australia years have proven a great resource. Our outstanding citizens, our international award winners, scientists, artists, and sportsmen, show in their names the diversity of their backgrounds. Australia has given peace and a home to so many: and they have repaid that gift in their rich contributions.

“Yet on this Australia day, when we rejoice in our fortune, let us not forget those areas in which we can still advance. The indigenous and the recent refugee communities – the oldest and the newest. The indigenous people kept and cared for this land so that it flourishes. The new migrants came from countries where many of their parents fought, suffered and died for our freedom during the Second World War. Let us remember Khartoum, Tobruck, El Alamein. These are the people that are calling for our help now.

“The Australian government and people have long held that the availability of fair work is one of the most fundamental rights. Work means income, it means morale, it means inclusion, it means validation, It means greater prosperity for each and every Australian. The programs that help people prepare for and find work are among the most useful in this nation; let them be extended and made more effective.

“A strong Australia means a fair and inclusive Australia. Let us work in harmony, with linked arms, to benefit all. Let us fight the evils of racism and injustice which are to be found even in our fair country. Together, let us Advance Australia Fair.