



# MEDIA RELEASE

**From:**

**African Think Tank Inc.**

**WORKING WITH  
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## **AFRICAN THINK TANK CONGRATULATES AUSTRALIA'S FIRST FEMALE PRIME MINISTER**

The African Think Tank today congratulated Julia Gillard on her elevation to Australia's first female Prime Minister.

"Julia Gillard is a woman of heart," said Dr. Berhan Ahmed, Chairperson of the African Think Tank. "She comes from a diverse electorate with a high migrant population. She has an excellent grasp of the issues faced by new migrants to this country. She is a person who has had to struggle and overcome many barriers in her own life. This is a Prime Minister who understands the hope and dreams, and the struggle to find your own place and to realise those hopes and dreams, that is faced by so many.

"It is inspiring for us in the migrant communities to see a woman attain, for the first time, to the highest place in the land. Her success, like the success of President Obama in the United States, is a sign of change, a sign of hope.

"Many of the women in our Australian-African communities come from countries where women have historically been disempowered. A large part of our work is to enable the women in our migrant communities to step up to a more equal role and to make their voices heard. Through our influence, and through the example of our lives in Australia, we are also working to help women find equality in the lands from which we come. Where women have power in a society, that is a more just, a more equitable, and a more peaceful society.

"The African Think Tank would also like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. His period in office was a period of signal advances and great achievements. Among these were important and humane changes with acknowledgement to the Aboriginal people and treatment of refugees. It may well be that history will be kinder to his Prime Ministership than the present.

"If there is one lesson to be learnt from this, it is this: that a government, a party, a leader must keep their hearts with the people and never lose touch with the realities of their lives. This is a lesson that all of us who have been entrusted by the people with positions of leadership must constantly keep to heart."

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