Multicultural Australia welcomes new policy from government

Ethnic communities and progressive thinkers in Australia should welcome Minister Chris Bowen’s announcement of a new Australian Multicultural Policy in Sydney last night.

“This is a red letter day, a day when the Australian Government has shown leadership and rejected European indictments on multicultural societies,” said Pino Migliorino, Chair of the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia (FECCA) which is the peak national body for multicultural communities in Australia.

FECCA has strongly advocated for a national multicultural policy and submitted its own “Different But Equal- FECCA’s National Multicultural Agenda” to the government in October 2010. The new government policy reflects many of the recommendations of FECCA’s agenda particularly in addressing the realms of belonging, participation and contribution of multicultural Australians. FECCA had also emphasised the importance of cultural maintenance, focus on the rights and not just the responsibilities of multicultural Australians and on the importance of data and research, all of which are included in the government’s Australian Multicultural Policy.

FECCA launched a national campaign in Sydney in November 2010, “Reclaim Multiculturalism” which drew over 120 organisations and leaders across Australia supporting its national agenda.

Mr. Migliorino said, “We congratulate the government on telling the world that Australian multiculturalism is unique, successful and vital in creating a peaceful and harmonious society. We commend the Minister for his eloquent exposition of the genius of multiculturalism and acknowledge the passion of thousands of Australians who supported our advocacy. The world will watch while we celebrate Australian multiculturalism; this is only the beginning.”

Mr Migliorino added that the leadership shown by the Minister and the government will influence the important next steps which are to develop the structures and programs for multiculturalism to flourish in Australia.

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