

# Declaration Of Religious Harmony

We declare that:

Australia is historically an ethnically, socially and religiously diverse society;

this diversity has enriched Australia's customs and culture and ought to be celebrated publicly;

multiculturalism continues to influence the evolution of our national institutions, including the Australian Defence Organisation, to which it contributes knowledge, experience and ideas;

tolerance should be a fundamental feature of Australian society and in the Australian way of life;

all Australians, including those serving in Defence, are entitled to freedom of religious belief and expression;

the religious beliefs, customs and obligations of all Defence personnel must be respected and accommodated wherever and whenever practically possible;

people with different religious convictions can and ought to work and live together in peace and harmony;

religious dialogue and discussion should be fostered and religious harmony encouraged in all places where people of differing religious commitments work and live;

we repudiate any form of attracting adherents that relies upon or advocates coercion or violence; and

cultural and religious harmony contributes significantly to operational capability and enhances Defence's role of defending Australia and its national interests.

The Venerable Thich Quang Ba  
Senior Deputy Chair  
Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation  
of Australia and New Zealand

Rabbi Raymond Apple AM RFD  
Senior Rabbi  
The Great Synagogue, Sydney

Mr Ahmed Youssef  
Canberra Islamic Centre

Dr Tom Frame  
Anglican Bishop to the ADF

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