

# Australian Citizenship Council announced

Media release MPS 104/98 - Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

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### Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Philip Ruddock, MP

**Media release  
August 7, 1998**

The Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Philip Ruddock, today announced the establishment of the Australian Citizenship Council to provide advice on contemporary issues relating to Australian citizenship.

Mr Ruddock said the founding of the Australian Citizenship Council is recognition by the Government of the national importance and significance of Australian citizenship as the 'unifying force' which binds all Australians together.

"Australian citizenship reflects our democratic traditions and diversity while emphasising our shared values, our common purpose and vision. It is also symbolic of the inclusive nature of our society and our unity as a nation.

"Citizenship is about loyalty to Australia and its people, a shared belief in the democratic process, respect for the rights and liberties of other Australians, and a commitment to uphold and obey Australia's laws."

Mr Ruddock said with the 50th anniversary of Australian citizenship occurring on 26 January 1999, the Council's initial task will be to provide advice on appropriate ways to mark this important celebration.

"As Australia moves into the new millennium, and we celebrate the first Centenary of Federation in 2001, the Australian Citizenship Council will play a crucial role.

"It will provide both the Government and people of Australia with advice on how we can further enhance Australian citizenship as not only the unifying force but also the symbol at the very heart of what being Australian is all about," Mr Ruddock said.

The Council will also report to the Minister by the end of 1999 on contemporary issues in Australian citizenship policy and law.

The Council members are:

#### Chairman:

Sir Ninian Stephen KG, AK, GCMG, GCVO, KBE, PC, Commandeur de la Legion d'Honneur (France)

#### Members:

Mrs Sallyanne Atkinson AO  
Mr Mark Ella AM  
The Hon Robert Ellicott QC  
Ms Mirta Gonzalez  
Archbishop Barry Hickey OAM  
Professor Donald Horne AO  
The Hon Gary Johns  
Mr Bernard Kilgariff AM  
Miss Tan Le  
Ms Caryl McQuestin  
Mr Robert Manne  
Ms Marilynne Paspaley  
Professor Judith Sloan

"I am pleased so many distinguished Australians, from all spheres of our diverse community, have agreed to serve on the Council under the chair of the eminent Sir Ninian

Stephen," Mr Ruddock said.

"As former Governor General, with extensive experience in a wide range of areas both in Australia and overseas, Sir Ninian will bring valuable expertise and insight into the Council's deliberations."

"I look forward to working closely with the Council as it undertakes its important work."

Friday, 7 August, 1998

Media inquiries: Brad Robinson 0419 278 715

## ***Australian Citizenship Council Terms Of Reference***

The Australian Citizenship Council has been established as an independent body to advise the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs on Australian citizenship matters that are referred to it by the Government.

Given that the 50th Anniversary of Australian citizenship will occur on 26 January 1999, the Australian Citizenship Council's first task will be to provide advice to the Minister on appropriate arrangements for celebrating this significant occasion.

The Council is also to prepare and present a report to the Minister by the end of 1999 on:

contemporary issues in Australian citizenship policy and law to be addressed as Australia moves into the new millennium; and

how to promote increased community awareness of the significance of Australian citizenship for all Australians, including its role as a unifying symbol.

From time to time, the Australian Citizenship Council may also be given other tasks by the Minister relating to Australian citizenship matters.