



Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Greenslopes Electorate, Multiculturalism

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (1.13 am): Harmony Day arrived early in Holland Park. On Sunday I was pleased to join with the community members at the Holland Park Mosque for a flag-raising ceremony and also a celebration of the 20-year contribution of their current imam, Uzair Akbar, and the previous four imams who served the community over their 110-year history. Imam Uzair is deeply respected in our community. He has done so much for the members of his faith and he has reached out much further than that. I have approached Imam Uzair on a number of occasions with matters in my community. His response is always fast and it is genuine: 'I will help and we'll be there.' The work he has done with the young people of his community has helped many to find a path to peace.

I was greatly moved by the words spoken by Halim Rane about his grandfather, the very first imam of the mosque. Imam Rane served the community for four decades as a self-educated volunteer, working during the day as a fruit hawker and spending all of his spare time caring for his community. I asked one of the congregation how a volunteer self-taught imam compared to the more formally trained modern imams. He replied, 'They all care deeply about our community and, sure, Imam Rane may not have had the same degree of knowledge as the new imams, but then neither did we. We all learn together.'

The mosque has been part of the Holland Park community for almost 110 years. There are few institutions, families or organisations that can make that boast. We all know that the legitimacy of Muslims in our community has been severely challenged in recent times. The community chose to raise three flags permanently to demonstrate that they are proud Australians and proud Muslims—proud to be both—and proud to be part of a country that celebrates every person's right to worship freely. The Queensland and Australian flags were raised to state clearly and unambiguously that the members of the Holland Park Mosque are proud and law-abiding members of our state and our country. Alongside the Australian and Queensland flags, the Australian Aboriginal flag was also raised. This flag has historical significance to the descendants of the original Australian Muslim community. The mosque was originally built by Afghan cameleers, many of whom married women from Indigenous backgrounds as there was a law banning women from migrating from Afghanistan. The Aboriginal flag is raised in memory of those mothers as original mothers.

I want to make special mention of Aunty Janeth Deen, who initiated and organised this event. She is a great leader in our community and I thank her for serving our community in so many ways. We are a successful multicultural society. This has not happened by accident. We should all be extremely proud of it. When faced with differences, we can turn away in fear or perhaps build a wall to hide behind, or we can raise a flag for everyone to see—a flag that says we are tolerant, we are welcoming, we are here to support each other and, most importantly, we are all humans. Aunty Janeth Deen chose to do that. Imam Rane and Uzair chose to do that, and that is what I will choose to do.