

PRESS RELEASE

“On March 21 we celebrate Harmony Day in Australia, traditionally held on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination”

Tony Fitzgerald, the NT Anti Discrimination Commissioner, says “no Australian, and no person who seeks asylum or seeks to settle in Australia, deserves to be discriminated against because of their appearance, beliefs or culture”.

“Elimination of racial discrimination means elimination of unfair or less favourable treatment based on race, colour, descent or culture. Unfair discrimination is a breach of human rights” the Commissioner said.

Commissioner Fitzgerald pointed out that Australia is a signatory to various international conventions designed to eliminate racism, incitement to racism and to prohibit organisations which promote racial discrimination.

He believes that racism can be eliminated. “As a community, we must understand and respect fairness and diversity and avoid language or behaviour which is disrespectful. We need to treat people as individuals and judge them on their merits, rather than assuming that a person will act in a particular way because of their race or culture.”

“The diversity of the population in the NT is one its strengths” the Commissioner said. “We must not allow racism and intolerance to weaken our unique and marvellous society and I urge all Territorians to consider how they may personally contribute to the elimination of racism in the NT on Harmony Day”.



TONY FITZGERALD
ANTI DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER

20 March 2006