



PRESS RELEASE

ASSYRIAN IN AUSTRALIA CELEBRATING “RETURN TO ASSYRIA”

Sydney – 1 July 2019.

The 2019 Assyria Day conference was held on the Sunday 30th of June, 2019. Just over 200 young Assyrians from all over Sydney gathered at Eden Venues “Nineveh Lounge” for the 9th annual Assyria Day conference, making it the largest Assyria Day conference held in NSW. The theme for this year’s conference was “Past, Present and Future”.

The program commenced at 3:00 pm with the singing of both the Australian and Assyrian national anthems, followed by a blessing prayer and blessings by His Beatitude Mar Meelis Zaia, Metropolitan of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East Diocese of Australia, New Zealand & Lebanon. After welcoming the attendees, the masters of ceremonies Ms Adorena Shahen invited Mr. Hermiz Shahen, Deputy Secretary General of the AUA, to officially welcome the guests. Other speakers included Mrs Tanya Davies MP , State Member for Mulgoa representing The Hon. John Sidoti, MP, Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans. The Conference was also attended by Mr Guy Zangari, MP, State Member for Fairfield, Dr Hugh McDermott, MP, State Member for Prospect, Mayor Frank Carbone, Councillor Dai Le, and Councillor Paul Azzo from Fairfield City and representative of the Jewish and many Assyrian organisations in Sydney.

This year’s conference featured keynote speakers from different areas and expertise. Speaking at the Assyria Day conference were Professor Efreem Yildiz, Hebrew and Aramaic Studies at the Faculty of Philology and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Salamanca, in Spain; Guest Speaker, Peter Youkhana, GISHRU Attendee; Guest Speaker, Khlapieel Bnyameen, Assyrian Activist joined the conference live from the Assyrian homeland and Mr Albert Shlemon , President of the Assyrian Cultural & Social Youth Association ACSYA , introducing their documentary “Assyria A.D”.

Professor Efreem spoke about the Assyrian Identity and Their Religious Complexity, He provided participants with necessary intellectual information about the Assyrian identity and the harsh situation of constant oppression and harassment over a period of centuries that led the Assyrians to attach and give much more importance to their Christian religion than to their national identity. On countless occasions Assyrians were promised that their land would be returned, yet justice has never been done to them. The only way to do them justice is to recognize their existence, and to support them in their task of re-building themselves as a people, which is exactly what Assyrians have always struggled to do.

Following Peter Youkhana, spoke about his last year journey back to Assyria (North Iraq), which was organised by GISHRU “. Part of his trip included visiting ancient Assyrian towns, ruins, and even the city of Nineveh (Mosul). He emphasised on the importance of the Assyrian Youth to not forgetting their land, though they have been driven out and they should organise constant trips learning and cherishing our language and traditions as well as visiting our historical sites, monasteries and villages in our homeland.

Khlapieel Bnyameen gave an inside on what is happening on the ground in the Assyrian homeland in Northern Iraq, he spoke about the continued confiscation the Assyrian lands and archaeological sites by the Kurds despite raising these matters several times with the authorities in the region. The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) discriminatory policies has direct effect on our people's life. Their continued policy in controlling the security and administration in the province of Nineveh rejecting all attempts to hand it over to the people of the region and let them be part of the national security system, the intimidation and the unfair process in providing employment, all these have led to impoverishment of Assyrian people forcing them to migrate and thus, demographic changes are taking place in the Assyrian territories. This shows the participation of the State government directly or indirectly in the process of emptying the region of its original component.

At the conclusion of the following resolutions were unanimously approved:

RECOGNIZING the active role that Assyrian Youth are playing in social mobilizations in many countries of the world and their willingness to assume responsibilities in the social and political agendas. In this sense, the 2019 Assyria Day Youth Conference, join their voices and efforts to support the Assyrian National Rights in the Assyrian homeland.

The Young Assyrians

The Subsidiary of the Assyrian Universal Alliance

Australian Chapter



















