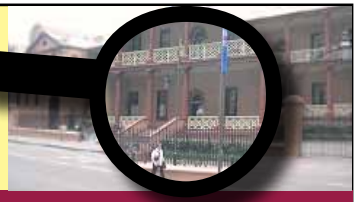




# Focus On PARLIAMENT

MAY 2013



## ASSYRIANS NEW YEAR FESTIVAL, 6763 IN SYDNEY



VIP guests at Exhibition



Assyrian Exhibition



Assyrian Guard at Historical Tablo



Guests at Assyrian New Years Festival – L to R Rev Fred Nile, Miss Silvana Nero, Mariam Tadros and Craig Kelly MP member for Hughes, and Peter Tadros



Assyrian Folk Dancers



Rev Fred Nile addressing Assyrian New Year Festival



Packed Assyrian New Year Festival

Once again the Assyrian Australian National Federation (AANF) together with the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) hosted one of the most successful Assyrian New Year Festivals in the last eight years where an estimated nine thousands people gathered at Fairfield showground to celebrate this historical event. The Festival which started at 10:00 am till 10:00 pm included Assyrian Folk Dancing on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2013.

The formal proceedings began with the official opening of the Assyrian Art Exhibition at 2:15pm by the Hon. Chris Bowen MP. The customary New Year Program commenced at 2:30 pm, with the Australian and Assyrian national anthems performed by Miss Jessica Ablahad, followed by prayer by Rev. Father Ninos Eliya from the Assyrian Church of the East.

After welcoming the attendees, the Master of ceremonies Mr. Ninos Aaron, Chairman of Young Assyrians invited Mr. David M. David, President of the Assyrian Australia National Federation to welcome the attendees followed by Mr. Hermiz Shahan, Deputy Secretary General of the Assyrian Universal Alliance. Both leaders thanked representatives of the Local, State and Federal Government for their attendance and support over years. Mr. Shahan spoke about the bitter genocide committed against the Assyrians by the Ottomans during WWI that has left deep marks in the hearts and mind of every Assyrian. The cold-hearted murder of 750,000 defenseless Assyrian souls reduced the Assyrian mass, impacting the whole nation dramatically. Besides losing about three quarters of their population, the genocide has resulted in the loss of Assyrian historical lands in today's south-east Turkey, caused the scattering of the Assyrian people and has negatively impacted the economic well-being of all Assyrians. Mr. Shahan also talked about the atrocities facing the Assyrian people of Iraq and the future of Syria's estimated 2.5 million Christians who have traditionally prospered in that country and the uncertainty they now face.

Mr. Shahan appealed to the Australian government to lay out a comprehensive strategy for assisting the Assyrians and other ethno-religious minorities of Iraq who are facing a systematic campaign of massacre and destruction. He stated that the international community has an opportunity to affect a positive change in our favour. Our people in Iraq are demanding a province in the Nineveh Plains, the heartland of the Assyrian empire, under similar political and human rights measures enjoyed by the country's Arabs and Kurds. This province will be under the jurisdiction of Iraq's central government, both contributing to and benefiting from the economic prosperity of the country. This will encourage our people to remain on and persuade the displaced and refugees to return to their ancestral lands.



Dramatic Arts piece simulated the arrival of the King and Queen of Assyria

Mr. Ninos Aaron Chairman of the Young Assyrian a subsidiary of the Assyrian Universal Alliance – Australian Chapter spoke about their group activities since their establishment in July last year and encouraged our Assyrian youth to participate in their efforts and activities.

Other guest speakers were the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Federal member for McMahon; Mr. Craig Kelly MP; Federal member for Hughes, representing The Hon Tony Abbott MP, Leader of the Opposition; Mr. Chris Hayes MP, Federal member for Fowler; Mr Guy Zangari, MP, State Member for Fairfield, Shadow Minister for Citizenship & Communities; The Hon. David Clarke MLC; and Rev. The Hon Fred Nile MLC, Leader of the Christian Democratic party. In attendance were also Mr. Andrew Rohan MP, Member for Smithfield representing the Premier of NSW, the Hon. Barry O'Farrell, MP; Mr. Nick Lalich, MP, State member for Cabramatta and Councillor Ninos Khoshaba representing Mayor of Fairfield City. Among other dignitaries were Inspector Tony Mitchell, Duty Officer from Fairfield Local Area Command representing Superintendent Peter Lennon; Superintendent Ray King, Liverpool Local Area Commander and Superintendent James Johnson, Green Valley Local Area Commander.

All members praised in their speeches the role of the Assyrian Universal Alliance in its continued deliberations and meetings with the Australian government. They talked about the inevitability of the Assyrian people to obtain their full rights and freedom in Iraq. They blessed this great occasion, showed their admiration of the Assyrian Art Exhibition that was organized by the Young Assyrians branch of the Assyrian Universal Alliance – Australian Chapter and expressed pride in the Assyrian civilization.

The official opening was attended by representative of many Assyrian organisations, prominent people and representative of the Armenian, Greeks, Coptics and Mandian communities.

This year the Australian Assyrian of the Year Award was presented to Dr. John Atto, in recognition of his valuable contribution and for outstanding commitment shown to the Assyrian community.

At 6:00 pm, a dramatic arts piece was performed by a collaboration of Assyrian youth groups. The theatrical piece simulated the arrival of King and Queen of Assyria from the remote past to bless the festivity.

The Festival ended with a beautiful display of Fireworks at 9:00 pm accompanied with live music.

A special thanks to the organisers, the Fairfield police and all attendees who made this festival such a success.

Assyrian Universal Alliance  
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Rev Fred Nile and Miss Silvana Nero congratulate Assyrian guards



Assyrian Historical Tableau Emperor and Queen of Assyria



VIP Guests at Assyrian New Year Festival



Historical procession



Rev Fred Nile and Miss Silvan Nero examine ancient Statue



The Royal Assyrian Guard and attendants in procession



Joyful climax of Assyrian New Year Festival



Assyrian New Year Festival at Fairfield showground