



# PRIME MINISTER

9 February 2015

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
THE HON. TONY ABBOTT MP  
CONDOLENCE MOTION ON MARTIN PLACE SIEGE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PARLIAMENT HOUSE**

E&OE.....

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move that this House:

1. Recognise the tragic events around the siege of the Lindt Café in Martin Place, Sydney, on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December, last year;
2. Extend its deepest and heartfelt sympathies to the families and friends of Katrina Dawson and Tori Johnson for their loss;
3. Honour the courage shown by those held in the Lindt Café;
4. Acknowledge the response of law enforcement and security agencies and emergency services personnel to a difficult and dangerous situation;
5. Recognise the calm and steadfast response of the people of Sydney, as well as the wholehearted support of the Australian people for the people held inside the Lindt Café and their families both during and after the siege;
6. Thank the leaders and people of other nations who stood with Australia during this testing time;
7. Note with sadness that other countries have recently suffered at the hands of terrorists, including France, Canada, Iraq, Egypt, Nigeria, Japan and Jordan;
8. Declare our deep repugnance towards terrorism in all its forms; and
9. Affirm the unity and resolve of this Parliament to protect our citizens and our democratic freedoms.

Madam Speaker,

The 15<sup>th</sup> of December last year was a testing day for our country.

It was a testing day for the police and for the security and emergency services.

It was a testing day for the people of Sydney, witnessing an atrocity unfold in a café known to many Sydneysiders in the utterly familiar surrounds of Martin Place.

Above all, it was a testing day for the men and the women held in the Lindt Café and for their families.

So Madam Speaker, today, we welcome to the Chamber the men and women held in the Lindt Café as well as the families of Tori Johnson and Katrina Dawson.

The thoughts and the prayers of 24 million Australians – and many millions more around the world – were with you on that terrible day.

And I want to assure you, we are still with you – we are still with you as you come to terms with that horrific experience.

Every day must be a struggle for the Johnson and the Dawson families.

We grieve with you and we hope that you draw strength and comfort from the support of the people of our country.

We are so glad that you are here, in the home of our democracy, in the very cradle of that noble idea that men and women can make their own choices for their own lives provided that it doesn't hurt anyone else.

Madam Speaker, Australia is a peaceful country.

We are a beacon of hope and liberty throughout the world.

Sydney – our largest city – is so cosmopolitan and diverse that anyone can be at home there.

In this country, our differences demonstrate our freedom and our willingness to lend a hand and to get along makes this the best place on earth to live.

This, Madam Speaker, is what was threatened on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December last year.

This, Madam Speaker, is what we are determined to uphold and defend at home and abroad every single day.

Madam Speaker, the best response to evil is good.

The best response to terrorism is to live normal lives, because that shows that we might be threatened but we will not be changed.

The Martin Place siege, I regret to say, was inspired by that death cult, now rampant in much of Syria and Iraq, which is a travesty of religion and governance and which should never be dignified with the term Islamic State.

The Martin Place siege was the act of terror that we hoped would never occur in this country.

I want to assure the men and women in the Gallery, I want to assure all Australians, that this Government, as well as our state counterparts, are determined to learn from what happened at the Lindt Café on that dreadful day.

We are considering the Commonwealth-State review which will be released, with our response, before the end of the month. There is also a NSW Coronial inquiry that's underway.

But, Madam Speaker, the first duty of government is to keep our citizens safe.

And while no one can promise that a brutal act of terror will never occur again, these inquiries will identify what we can do to further protect our people and our country.

I pledge, Madam Speaker, that I will do whatever I humanly can to help keep our people safe.

That's why this Government has boosted its spending on our security and intelligence services.

That's why members of the Australian Defence Force, even now, are currently working with the forces of other nations to disrupt and degrade the ISIL, or Daesh, death cult.

Air strikes, Madam Speaker, including our own, have hit it hard, stopping its momentum and degrading its forces.

This death cult has declared war on the world and the world is both hitting back and reaching out.

Madam Speaker, in the days after the atrocity against Charlie Hebdo, the people of France responded to the brutality of Islamist extremists by walking arm-in-arm through the streets of Paris.

Likewise, in the days after the Sydney siege, Australians responded by carpeting Martin Place with flowers.

Tens of thousands brought tributes, including, Madam Speaker, a bride who had interrupted her wedding day to do so.

Manal Kassem's floral tribute was a reminder that Muslim Australians were as affronted by the events of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of December as every Australian.

She reminded us, as did all who responded during those difficult days, that for every person who seeks to impose extremism and violence there are countless more who will stand against them.

Madam Speaker, Australia did not stand alone.

I do want to place on record my thanks to the many national leaders who called in response to the terrorism in Martin Place.

I do want to assure the House that we will defend ourselves against those who seek to do us harm, but we will always do so in keeping with our values – our Australian values.

Those values are embodied in this institution and in our shared adherence to liberal thought and to democratic pluralism.

We stand for the right of individuals to choose their own paths and to live their lives free of fear.

We stand against organisations or individuals that promote hatred here or recruit vulnerable Australians for terrorism abroad.

We have already made it an offence to advocate terrorism and made it easier to ban terrorist organisations and, Madam Speaker, if we have to seek further legislation, we will.

This is the first sitting day of the Parliament for 2015.

This year, like every other year, there will be moments of contention, partisanship, bitterness, and drama, but there will also be moments of profound unity where our shared love of country prevails over everything else.

Madam Speaker, this is such a moment.

In April, some in this Chamber will travel to Gallipoli to pay tribute to the courage and resourcefulness and determination and sacrifice of our forebears a century ago.

But today, we need not look so far, or travel so far, to see resilience, courage and decency.

We look to the Gallery – and we see modern Australia.

We see young and old, men and women of diverse backgrounds – and in them, we see the courage and the resourcefulness and the decency that we saw in other generations in another context.

Madam Speaker, greater love hath no man or woman than to lay down their life for their friend.

We salute Tori Johnson and Katrina Dawson.

We salute everyone touched by the siege – touched by this atrocity.

I commend the motion to the House.

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