



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Melbourne Electorate: Chinese and  
Vietnamese Australian Communities**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 25 February 2015**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Wednesday, 25 February 2015	<b>Source</b> House
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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Bandt, Adam, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

**Mr BANDT** (Melbourne) (09:41): Chuc mung nam moi. Kung hei fat choy. Xin nian kuai le. To all members of the Melbourne and Australian community: happy lunar new year. Last week, Vietnamese, Chinese and other communities in my electorate of Melbourne welcomed the Year of the Goat, and I wish my constituents a happy and prosperous new year.

I want to take this opportunity, in Australia's parliament, to say to the Vietnamese and Chinese communities in Melbourne and Australia: thank you. Thank you for making Melbourne such a great place to live. People come from around Australia to visit vibrant, multicultural Melbourne, and I say to all of you: you are a big reason for this. It has been my privilege to meet with and represent Chinese and Vietnamese community groups around my electorate, including in Fitzroy, Richmond, Collingwood, Flemington, the CBD and other places. I cannot imagine Melbourne without your contribution. And I know that we can all learn much from you. You show us the importance of looking after each other, especially the older members of our community. You have been great role models for all of us, including for more recently arrived waves of migrants.

It has been my honour to be invited to lunar new year celebrations in my electorate of Melbourne. I would like to acknowledge the outstanding organisation of the Atherton Gardens Residents Association of North Yarra Community Health; Vietnamese Community In Australia, Victorian Chapter; and Indochinese Elderly Refugees Association of Victoria. I want to pay special tribute to RABA, the Richmond Asian Business Association—in particular, Ms Dieu Nguyen, Mr Toan Pham, Mr Meca Ho and the RABA committee—for organising the wildly successful Victoria Street Lunar New Year Festival, which is attended by thousands and which goes from strength to strength.

This year also marks the 40th anniversary of the Vietnamese community in Australia, and it is with respect and admiration that I note that they have committed to using this 40th anniversary to say thank you to Australia. In 2009, the Vietnamese community in Victoria came together to raise over \$1 million for the victims of the Black Saturday bushfires. This year, the community will be raising funds for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal. Members of the community have also launched an initiative to serve Vietnamese food to people experiencing homelessness, through Melbourne soup vans.

The success of the Vietnamese community is also a reminder to the rest of us that, when Australia extends a welcome to people who are coming here seeking a better life, we all benefit. People who are pillars of the community now are people that we would once have called 'boat people'. They are now occupying very senior positions within the community, and we can all learn a lot from them. It may come as a bit of a shock to the Australian community to know—and we should pause to reflect—that hundreds of Vietnamese asylum seekers currently remain in detention or community detention, and we must work to release them.

To everyone in the Chinese and Vietnamese Australian communities: thank you for being so inspirational; thank you for your contribution. I wish you a happy and successful Year of the Goat. You always have a friend in the Greens.