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GREEK AUSTRALIANS MAPPING THEIR FUTURE

3-DAY NATIONAL FORUM MELBOURNE

The place of Greek Australians in the 21st Century will be the main topic of the 3-day national forum to be held in Melbourne in April 2004.

The Forum is supported by peak Greek community organizations across Australia and a wide range of prominent organizations and individuals, and is managed by a broadly-based Steering Committee.

“This will be the first such National Forum ever held in Australia and it aims to bring together a broad range of Greek Australians concerned with the affairs of Australia’s third largest community in the nation”, said Professor Mary Kalantzis, Chair of the Steering Committee, in launching the Forum’s information and participation brochure.

The forum is structured around the following six main themes of contemporary social, economic and cultural life of Greek Australians and has a special emphasis on future trends and the involvement of young and younger people.

- The place of Greek Australians in contemporary Australia
- The future of Australian diversity
- Youth and generational sustainability
- Community, language and cultural maintenance
- The future of community organizations, networks and diasporas
- Relations with country of origin

The prominent speakers at the forum from Australia and overseas includes:

- Gough Whitlam was the Prime Minister of Australia from 1972 to 1975 during which time he introduced multicultural radio programs for ethnic minorities and dismantled the final vestiges of the White Australia policy.
- Peter Pappas is the first director of the Foundation for Hellenic Culture in North America and founding member of www.greekworks.com based in the United States.
- Daniel Kyriacou is the President of the National Union of Students in 2003.
- Maria Vamvakinou Federal Member for Calwell and the first Greek-born woman to enter Parliament
- Dimitris Dollis is the former Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Victoria and is now with the Greek Government based in Athens.
- Sharan Burrow is the President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.
- Andrew Demetriou is the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Football League and former North Melbourne and Hawthorn player.
- Prof Joseph Lo Bianco is the founder and Chief Executive Office of Language Australia: National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia and the author of Australia’s first language policy The National Policy on Languages.
- Stavroula Raptis is a member of the South Australian Ethnic and Multicultural Affairs Commission and the Greek Orthodox Community of South Australia.

Professor Kalantzis said the Forum would provide a unique opportunity for Greek Australians to reflect on issues and policies responsive to a new reality, one of no longer being primarily immigrants but rather Greek Australians.

The Forum is open to all organisations and individuals. “The Steering Committee”, said Professor Kalantzis, “invites all those who wish to present a paper (either in English or Greek), to participate in discussion panels, or simply attend the Forum.” For further information please check the website at www.agc.org.au or contact the Secretariat on (03) 9925 3709.

For press comments and interviews please contact:

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