

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## **Unique conference to explore migrant and host community issues**

A conference exploring the issues and challenges confronting newly-arrived migrants and ex-refugees and their host communities will begin at the University of Tasmania in Launceston tomorrow (Friday 1 August) at the Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre.

*Social Inclusion and Exclusion of Culturally Diverse Communities; Strategies and Experiences* aims to bring together communities from across Australia, in particular Tasmania, to share ideas about the special settlement support needs of new arrivals that are an issue for all sectors of the community.

UTAS conference convenor, Dr Rob Andrew (with Assoc. Prof. Danny Ben-Moshe of Victoria University), said that the conference was a unique gathering of academics, refugee communities and service providers (employers, education providers, unions).

“This conference is not only relevant to migrant and refugee communities but to all elements of the Launceston community because it reflects the reality of the changing nature of the Australian community in general and the Tasmanian community in particular,” he said.

“We will not only be sharing ideas but hope to bring about change in policy and practice and create dialogue within and between communities.”

The two-day conference will focus on five key themes:

- Employment, education and training;
- Housing;
- Social health and well-being for both migrant / refugee and host communities;
- Family and relationship sustainability;
- Racism and law enforcement.

The conference will feature two distinguished keynote speakers: Associate Professor Martha Kuwee Kumasa, from Wilfred Laurier University, Canada, and Professor Henry Reynolds, from the University of Tasmania.

Dr Kumsa arrived in Canada as a refugee in 1991, escaping a life of terror and uncertainty in Ethiopia. She spent 10 years in gaol as a prisoner of conscience in Addis Ababa and has received two international human rights awards.

Professor Reynolds is an eminent Australian historian acknowledged as the outstanding scholar in Aboriginal-European relations in Australia.

The 200 conference delegates come from across Australia and include international participants; more than 50 delegates have been directly nominated by migrant communities in Hobart and Launceston.

To help conference delegates understand the migrant and refugee experience, international and Australian films and community presentations will be screened throughout the conference.

**Contacts:**     **Dr Rob Andrew**  
                  **Ms Jade Hallam**  
                  **Assoc. Prof. Danny Ben-Moshe (Victoria University)**

### **Conference Highlights**

- **Friday 1 August, 8.45am:** Conference opening by Sarah Bolt, Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (Tasmania); Professor Roger Fay, Head of the School of Architecture and Design, UTAS; Professor Peter Creamer, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Industry and Community) Victoria University.
- **Friday 1 August, 9.45am:** Keynote speaker, Dr Martha Kumsa, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada.
- **Saturday 2 August, 8.45am:** Keynote speaker, Prof. Henry Reynolds, UTAS.
- **Saturday 2 August, 4pm:** Conference reflection and closing by Mr John Nyagua and Mr Kiros Zegeye (community leaders) with Mr Doug Walker (Tasmanian Director, Dept Immigration and Citizenship)

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