

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
City of Cockburn
on the occasion of a visit by his
Excellency, Dr Damir Kusen,
Croatian Ambassador to Australia
on Friday 13 May 2016

Good afternoon

I am delighted to once again welcome His Excellency, Dr Damir Kusen, Croatian Ambassador to Australia to the City of Cockburn together with Mr Mladian Cvrlje, Consul gerant, Consulate of the Republic of Croatia, Perth and Mr Tony Krsticevic MLA, the Member for Carine.

I acknowledge the Nyungar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we have gathered today and I pay respect to their Elders both past and present.

I acknowledge the presence of:

- Deputy Mayor Carol Reeve-Fowkes;
- Cr Phil Eva, JP
- Cr Lee-Anne Smith, OAM;
- Cr Lyndsey Sweetman;
- Mr Don Green, Director Governance & Community Services;
- Mr Stuart Downing, Director Finance & Administration; and
- Mr Charles Sullivan, Director Engineering & Works

I thank Valerie Viljoen, Civic Support Co-ordinator, City of Cockburn for making the necessary arrangement for today's welcome.

Your Excellency, your visit here today underpins the continuing strength of the City's long standing relationship with Croatia and its sister city relationship with Split, Croatia which was established on 6 July 1998.

Reciprocal visits between our two cities since then have ensured a bond

of friendship that is reflected in our community, cultural and business ties. I led a delegation from our City last year to Croatia where we were warmly received at our sister city of Split by Mayor Ivo Baldasar. The Australian Ambassador to Croatia, Ms Susan Cox was also a part of the greeting party, a very proud moment for Her Excellency, as it was the first opportunity for her to welcome an Australia local government to Croatia as a part of a sister city relationship.

Deputy Mayor Carol Reeve-Fowkes and Councillors Phil Eva and Lyndsey Sweetman, who are here today, were part of the delegation together with Councillor Stephen Pratt. For them it was an opportunity to visit Croatia for the first time and to explore the 'Old City' and other places of historical significance in and around the City of Split.

In January this year, the City hosted an art exhibition by acclaimed Croatian artist Drazenko Pacalat. The two paintings acquired by the City are on display today. A very sound relationship has been formed with Mr Pacalat and we look forward to his return visits from time to time.

Your Excellency, as you know, I was your guest at the Croatian National Day Celebration in Canberra in 2015 which also marked the 20th anniversary of the opening of the embassy in Canberra. It was indeed a very prestigious occasion and one that reflected the drive, enthusiasm and community & business focus that Croatians at home and throughout the world bring to the communities where they live – always remembering their birthplace, their family and friends and their cultural values.

As we approach the 25th Statehood Day of the Republic of Croatia on 25th June I take this opportunity to once again thank His Excellency for his visit today and the enduring friendship we have established at a local level with the Consul gerant in Perth, your Embassy in Canberra and with the City of Split, Croatia.

Thank you.