

Speech

on the occasion of

Consul General Hrvoje Petrusic

and his wife Romana

impending return to Croatia

Tuesday 24 July 2012

Good Evening

On behalf of the Elected Members and staff of the City of Cockburn I welcome you here tonight as we come together to recognise and thank the Consul General of the Republic of Croatia Hrvoje Petrusic and his wife Romana for their significant contribution to the Western Australian community and the strengthening of relations between Croatia and Australia.

I acknowledge the Noongar people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we have gathered tonight; and

pay respect to the Elders both past and present of the Noongar Nation and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians who may be present.

I would now like to formally welcome:

- Our guests of honour tonight the Consul General of the Republic of Croatia Hrvoje Petrusic and his wife Romana;
- The Honourable Ljiljana Ravlich, MLC Member for the East Metropolitan Region;
- Mr Tony Krstičević, MLA Member for Carine
- Mr Ray Lees JP & Freeman
- Deputy Mayor Kevin Allen and his wife Debra;
- Councillor Tony Romano and his wife Patricia,

- Councillor Carol Reeve-Fowkes and her husband Martin;
- Councillor Lee-Anne Smith;
- Councillor Steve Portelli and his partner Sharon;
- Councillor Stephen Pratt;
- My wife Patricia;
- Mr Stephen Cain, Chief Executive Officer, City of Cockburn;
- Mr Don Green, Director Administration & Community Services;
- Ms Cassandra Cooper, Community & Cultural Development Coordinator and other members of staff;
- Presidents, Vice Presidents and representatives of Community Clubs from across Perth;

- Other distinguished guests;
- Ladies and gentlemen.

As I said earlier, tonight is an opportunity to recognise and thank the Consul General of the Republic of Croatia, Hrvoje Petrusic and his wife Romana for their contributions to the Western Australian community and the work that they have been involved in to strengthen relations between Croatia and Australia.

The Croatian community has and continues to make a significant contribution to community life in Australia and many other parts of the world.

In particular, as you are aware, the City of Cockburn has been the home for many generations of Croatian families who have ensured our great City has grown and prospered over the years.

Hrvoje and Romana arrived in Perth to take up their post over five years ago and are due to leave our shores to travel home to Croatia in about two weeks time.

During their posting to Perth, Western Australia they have both worked very hard to provide a strong foundation within the Croatian and wider community to enable future gains to be achieved in terms of business & trade opportunities, community resilience and growth; and sporting and cultural experiences and exchanges between Croatia and Australia.

Having attended several receptions for Hrvoje and Romana it is very clear that they are held in the highest esteem by all they have met during their posting to Perth, Western Australia.

The City of Cockburn established its sister city relationship with the City of Split in 1998 under the then Mayor of Cockburn, John Grljusich. John is ill and therefore unable to be in attendance tonight (he sends his best wishes). I know that he was very proud to have initiated the sister city relationship with the City of Split.

You will be aware that our joint mission is to enhance friendship between our people, promote mutual understanding and advance an in-depth cooperation between our two cities in all fields.

The City of Cockburn has two other sister city relationships. They are with YueYang, China and Mobile, USA

In recognition of our sister city relationships with Yueyang, The People's Republic of China; Mobile, Alabama, United States of America and Split, Croatia a 'Friendship Way' has been created along one of the City's main roads - Spearwood Avenue from the suburb of Beeliar through to Coogee on the coastline.

It is unique in that it acknowledges our indigenous heritage and culture, our veterans and Peace itself through the provision of public artwork, various tree and shrub planting that has transformed the landscape in this locality.

Ever since their arrival in Australia Croatians have been known for their honesty, integrity, hard work; and importantly a respect for family and the community.

Hrvoje and Romana you have brought those same values to Western Australia in your diplomatic posting and we again thank you.

On behalf of the Elected members, members of staff and the Cockburn community I bid you Bon Voyage and look forward to catching up with you at some time in the future.

Please accept this gift on behalf of the Cockburn community.

