

media release

Monday, 8 May 2017

**Mosman
COUNCIL**

Celebrating our cultural diversity and inclusiveness

Welcoming and connecting with recently-arrived migrants or refugees will be the focus of a community forum to be held at Mosman Square Seniors Centre on Thursday 22 June from 9.30am. The free forum, Refugee and Migrant Voices: Celebrating Culture, Community and Inclusion, is being organised by the Lower North Shore Multicultural Network, which is a collaborative group of government and non-government agencies supported by Mosman Council.

Longer established residents, community and religious leaders and school representatives are being encouraged to attend the forum to learn more about how to help refugee or migrant residents effectively settle and connect.

Keynote speaker Renata Kaldor AO came to Australia with her family as a child refugee in 1949, fleeing the aftermath of the Holocaust and the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia. Her significant contributions to Australia have been recognised by the Order of Australia in 2002 and a Centenary medal in 2003. She was made an Honorary Fellow of the University of Sydney in 2005. She has served on many boards, including current roles on the Sydney Children's Hospital board and as Chair of the City Recital Hall, Angel Place.

In 2013, Renata and her husband helped to establish the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at UNSW which is dedicated to the study of international refugee law that aims to contribute to a more constructive public dialogue.

"I feel exceptionally lucky that my father brought us to Australia," Mrs Kaldor said. "Australians are fundamentally welcoming and generous, but the spin and so-called 'alternative facts' around refugees can jeopardise our social cohesion."

The morning forum, to be held during Refugee Week, will also feature multicultural performances, other presenters from refugee and migrant backgrounds who are making a positive difference in the Lower North Shore and Northern Sydney and information on local services as well as volunteering.

Noel Zihabamwe, Community Development Officer from Sydney Multicultural Community Services and based at North Sydney, will also outline services and support available for newly arrived migrants, refugees and international students living in the Lower North Shore.

Bookings are essential (<https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=271848>). For more information go to mosman.nsw.gov.au or phone 9978 4257 or for information on services and support for newly arrived migrants, refugees and international students, contact Sydney Multicultural Community Services on sydneymcs.org.au or phone 9955 3952.

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