

A FAIRER WORLD – INCLUSION FORUM
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2022

[no V-R Salute]

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all to Government House for this Hobart Human Library forum facilitated by A Fairer World.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

In September last year, I enjoyed attending and participating in the Cosgrove High School Grade 7 Action Day hosted by A Fairer World. However, this is the first occasion I have engaged with A Fairer World here at Government House. Don and I are very pleased to welcome you all. Helen Hortle and colleagues have been frequently hosted here over the years, for workshops and receptions.

I am proud to be associated with A Fairer World, and with your core philosophy of working together for a “just, peaceful and sustainable world future”. Your work is to find a practical way of working towards “the prevention of harmful behaviour caused by prejudice, inequality and discrimination”.

I am also delighted that your forum is being held this afternoon at Government House. Your forum helps ensure that the community role of the Governor embraces engagement with Tasmanians from all walks of life.

We host many organisations and events of great diversity, such as the Australian Red Cross, Kidsafe Tasmania, Meals on Wheels, Indian Cultural Society, Print Radio Tasmania, Culturally Diverse Alliance, Reconciliation Tasmania and many more. We confer awards, such as Order of Australia awards, science and Antarctic medal awards, palliative care awards, Diabetes Tasmania Kellion awards and more.

Awards are important to the recipients, to those who nominate them, and to those who have benefited from their selfless service.

By contrast, our Human Library “human books”, whose stories are many and often challenging, do not receive awards or medals. But what you achieve by sharing your stories is equally significant.

You effect positive change in workplaces, and I am sure positive changes in the minds of those who listen.

Courage and empathy are important aspects of the Human Library endeavour. I therefore want to congratulate those who have the courage to tell their stories, and those who have the empathy to listen and, thereby, gain important lived insights.

So – to Helen, Sharifah, Jodie and Caitlin and colleagues, to Barb Mawson and to all your committee colleagues, thank you. And together with my fellow co-Patron, former Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Robin Banks, we wish all of you a most rewarding and enjoyable afternoon.

David

[invites Helen to respond briefly]