

**CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES**

*Statement by Member for Perth*

**MS WARNOCK** (Perth) [12.50 pm]: Like other members who are “retiring” at the coming State election, I realise that there will be limited opportunities - indeed just three more sitting weeks - to speak in this place. I take this brief opportunity to say how pleasant I have found the duty, as a member of Parliament, of attending regular citizenship ceremonies. These significant events, which involve a bold step and a serious commitment from those who decide to join the Australian family, are for me among the most joyful occasions that members attend. Last night, at an excellent regular ceremony in the Town of Vincent, some 34 people from 16 countries became Australians. There was a genuine sense of celebration and pride in that room. My husband, whose family migrated from Scotland in 1948, has some idea about the difficulties faced by those who are transplanted from the other side of the world into a new environment. However, many of the new arrivals from Iraq, China, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, and Hong Kong, may well have endured tougher struggles to make it to their new country. Others at last night’s ceremony came from Scotland, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, India and Italy. I congratulate them all and wish them good fortune in Australia. I hope that this country will benefit from their contribution, just as it has from the input of millions of migrants and refugees who have come across the seas to Australia in more than 200 years. I know that they will come to share the passion and pride that other Australians emotionally demonstrated when Cathy Freeman won her race at Sydney’s famously successful 2000 Olympic Games.