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MEDIA RELEASE

Assyrian Genocide Monument Completed

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The Rev Fred Nile MLC, Leader of the Christian Democratic Party, gave the following address in the NSW Parliament.

"I am very pleased to announce that the third phase of the Assyrian Universal Alliance's plans to erect a memorial at Fairfield honouring the memory of the victims of the genocide committed by the Ottoman government during the First World War. The construction of the monument commenced on 23 May 2010 and the unveiling will be on Assyrian Martyrs Day, 7 August 2010. The foundation work was completed on Saturday 12 June and the 1.20 metre high base was completed on Tuesday 15 June", said Rev Fred Nile.

"The Assyrian Universal Alliance was able to commence preparations for and construction of the monument as soon as the official agreement was signed between the alliance and the City of Fairfield. On 15 December 2009 the Fairfield council voted unanimously to approve the memorial on the basis that all expenses would be met by the Assyrian community—there would be no call for council funding. The alliance has arranged a two-day program for the dedication of the monument and to commemorate the Assyrian genocide and martyrs day. The unveiling will commence at 10.00 a.m. in Bonnyrigg Park followed by a seminar on the Assyrian genocide and the screening of a documentary at the Assyrian social centre illustrating the horror of the genocide. The film will show the vicious, systematic butchering of 750,000 Assyrians, Armenians and Greeks carried out by the Ottoman Turks. All concerned individuals are welcome to attend that important ceremony. The Assyrian community will be very pleased to have non-Assyrians at the event.

The Turkish authorities have raised some objections about the erection of the monument, but it carries only peaceful messages. Its purpose is to honour and commemorate the victims of genocide by asking the world to stop all genocide of mankind. That is the same mankind that has lost its

meaning in the Middle East because of dictatorial regimes and fanaticism. The monument does not carry the names of the perpetrators, because that would only cause animosity and hatred. That is not the message of the memorial. It is a very simple structure with an Assyrian flag in the hand of a martyr holding the earth up high and at the base there will be children—the new generation that is asking the world to stop the killings. Four Assyrian human-headed winged lions have been included to repel evil and to protect the stature's nobility.

The monument does commemorate the Assyrian genocide but it is about peace. In no way is it intended to antagonise anyone, particularly the people of today's Turkey, who were not directly involved in the genocide. It was carried out by the Ottoman Empire and was condemned by the Turkish democratic government led by the Turkish hero Atatürk. I am pleased to bring this event to the attention of the Parliament and to invite all members to attend the celebration on 7 August 2010 at Bonnyrigg Park", Rev Nile stated.

End.