

## **2013 Ukrainian New Year's Eve celebrations (Malanka)**

*Message from Senator Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs*

I am delighted to extend my best wishes to all of you as you celebrate Malanka this evening.

Australia and Ukraine enjoy a friendly and growing relationship. Australia is home to more than 38,000 people of Ukrainian origin. The Ukrainian community in Australia brings a rich cultural heritage to our country and makes a significant contribution to our society.

The governments of Australia and Ukraine cooperate constructively in multilateral forums, including the United Nations, and we share a commitment to international peace and security. I was particularly pleased that in 2012 the year marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries Australia contributed one million euro to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund to assist in dealing with the legacies of the disaster. In addition, Australia appointed an Honorary Consul in Kyiv to assist in the smooth operation of day-to-day contact between our two countries, which I am sure will provide further impetus to our bilateral relationship. I hope this will also be of assistance to Australians of Ukrainian origin.

I look forward to continuing to build ties between our governments and the bond between our peoples in the years to come.

Happy New Year. May 2013 be happy and prosperous.