

Jade Buddha for Universal Peace World Tour

**Speech by Kelvin Thomson MHR for Wills
On the Occasion of the Unveiling of the Jade Buddha
at Quang Duc Monastery, Fawkner.
5th December 2009**

I am delighted to be able to share with you this moment of great pride and excitement for the Buddhist Community in Melbourne in general and the Quang Duc Monastery in particular.

The Jade Buddha, the largest in the world, is a mighty achievement and I congratulate Mr Ian Green, his wife Judy, and everyone else associated with this project.

The Jade Buddha brings a message of peace in the world. This message has never been more timely and appropriate. We live in a time of increasing conflict. The population of the world is increasing dramatically. For most of human history it was less than 1 billion. In the last hundred years it has increased to over 6 billion. It is projected to increase to over 9 billion by the middle of this century.

This increase is fuelling conflict over access to scarce resources – access to land, access to water, access to fish and other food supplies, access to oil and other sources of energy.

This conflict is the underlying cause of war, terrorism, and boat people. So the message of peace has never been more important.

The visit of the Jade Buddha is not the only cause of excitement for Melbourne's Buddhist community.

On Thursday his Holiness the Dalai Lama will be visiting Melbourne, and I am looking forward to meeting him then, as I did previously in Canberra in 2007.

May the time of the Jade Buddha in Melbourne and beyond be a time of peace in the world and happiness for all sentient beings.

Kelvin Thomson MHR for Wills