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## **WORLD HARMONY RUN BRINGS TEDDY BEARS TO NEWCASTLE**

**Tuesday, 6 May:** An international team of runners stopped at Newcastle today – bringing teddy bears for the children of Newcastle.

At a ceremony attended by the Lord Mayor, Cllr John Tate, runners from the World Harmony Run handed over 130 teddy bears, donated by people around Australia, to the disadvantaged children of Newcastle and the Central Coast. They are now in the safe hands of Jenny's Place, and will be distributed to children in coming weeks.

"This shows the true spirit of the World Harmony Run: people giving to others around the nation and world," said Runar Gigja of Iceland, a member of the World Harmony Run team.

The World Harmony Run is a 111-day relay run around Australia., that began in Brisbane on Sunday 27 April. It will run more than 15,000 kilometres, carrying a blazing torch of peace. The team of runners, representing 14 nations, will experience the heights of Mount Kosciusko and the never-ending flatness of the Nullarbor, the sparseness of the Great Sandy Desert and the green beauty of the Kakadu.

The World Harmony Run includes events in 100 nations. It will cover a total distance of 70,000 km, with an estimated 250,000 participants. In Australia, the Run returns to Brisbane for a final ceremony on August 15.

"The Run will bridge cultural and social barriers, and all the boundaries that separate nation from nation. It shows that athletics can be a powerful force for good," says running legend (and Mayor of the Gold Coast) Ron Clarke, a National Patron of the World Harmony Run.

During their journey, runners will stop at local schools, working with school officials nationwide to share the ideals of world harmony. Many world leaders have also participated in past World Harmony Runs, including Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, South African President Nelson Mandela, East Timorese President Dr Jose? Ramos Horta, Mother Teresa, and four Australian Prime Ministers.

The event (formerly known as the Peace Run) has been held since 1987, but this is the first time that it has run a continuous route around Australia. This year's event is a tribute to Sri Chinmoy (1931-2007), founder of the World Harmony Run.

Sri Chinmoy was an athlete, philosopher and humanitarian who saw sport as a powerful instrument for promoting global harmony. In recognition of his lifelong efforts to foster friendship between peoples and nations, he received the highest national award from more than 10 countries. Sri Chinmoy envisioned: "May each and every individual each day have a new dream of world harmony."

For more information and interviews, contact the World Harmony Run on 02 6251 2813.

Additional resources at:  
World Harmony Run Media Centre  
[www.worldharmonyrun.org/au/media](http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/au/media)