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<b>Subject:</b>	Fact Sheet: United States – Australia Cooperation: Deepening Our Strategic Partnership
<b>Date:</b>	2016/01/19 11:30:30
<b>Type:</b>	Note

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 19, 2016

**Fact Sheet: United States – Australia Cooperation:  
Deepening Our Strategic Partnership**

President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on January 19 met in Washington, 76 years after the United States and Australia established diplomatic relations, to celebrate the deep friendship and extraordinary cooperation between our two countries.

***Security Relationship***

The United States and Australia share strong bilateral defense and security cooperation under our Alliance. In October 2015, at the thirtieth annual Australia-United States Ministerial (AUSMIN) consultations, we reaffirmed the Alliance, reiterated a commitment to implement fully the U.S. Force Posture Initiatives in Australia, and signed a Joint Statement on Defense Cooperation articulating the principles underpinning defense cooperation. The Statement underscored our shared commitment to further enhance military interoperability and intelligence cooperation, as well as build cooperation with regional partners. The success of Talisman Saber 2015, our biennial joint military exercise, exemplifies the strength of the Alliance. The United States applauds Australia's commitment to spend 2 percent of GDP on defense as a tangible commitment to contribute to regional and international security.

The United States deeply appreciates Australia's tremendous support to the Counter-ISIL Coalition, the effectiveness of which was well demonstrated by recent progress against ISIL in Ramadi. We share a firm commitment to defeat ISIL and support the government of Iraq. The United States and Australia share the goal of reaching a political solution in Syria and are committed to providing humanitarian aid to those affected by the conflict, including resettlement of refugees and working with the international community to do more. We have served side-by-side in Afghanistan for over a decade. The United States recognizes Australia's sacrifices in Afghanistan and its continued crucial support for NATO's Resolute Support Mission and our joint commitment to a sovereign, secure, stable and unified Afghanistan.

The United States and Australia also share an interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, including in the South China Sea. We have made clear that claimants in the South China Sea should exercise restraint and halt land reclamation,

construction and further militarization of outposts, and voiced support for the peaceful settlement of disputes, including the right to pursue arbitration consistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The United States and Australia are committed to cooperation on nuclear security and to working together to make the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit a success. They are working to counter biological threats, whether naturally occurring, deliberate, or accidental, and are advancing the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) to prevent future outbreaks from becoming epidemics.

### ***Countering Violent Extremism***

The United States and Australia also share a commitment to countering violent extremism. Last year, the Australian Attorney-General attended the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism and announced a Combatting Terrorist Propaganda in Australia initiative focused on the Internet and social media. In June, Australia hosted the Regional Summit to Counter Violent Extremism to further goals outlined at the White House Summit and build on UN Security Council Resolution 2178. The Summit brought together key stakeholders from across government, civil society and industry with the aim of building capacity to address the threat posed by violent extremist groups. While work is underway on all five outcomes from the Regional Summit, the Australian Government is currently prioritizing the delivery of two outcomes: creating a compendium of counter-narratives and establishing a regional civil society network of experts in CVE. We will continue to work together and with our regional partners to improve efforts to stop the spread of violent extremism.

### ***Cooperating on Cyber Issues***

We share a commitment to cyber security and an open Internet—a transformative technology that has led to greater connectivity, efficiency, and access to markets—and together we are continuing to seek an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable Internet that also protects the privacy of our citizens.

To achieve these goals, the United States and Australia are committed to: supporting a new Track 1.5 U.S.-Australia Cyber Security Dialogue; working together to enhance our efforts to respond to cyber incidents, beginning with mapping our respective cyber incident response architectures, with the aim in the future to exercising our incident response measures; enhancing cybercrime cooperation, including through increased exchanges between respective law enforcement and cybercrime experts and more collaboration in cybercrime investigations; continuing to work together closely to promote voluntary peacetime norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace; and, enhancing the coordination of our cyber capacity building efforts in the Asia-Pacific region to improve the cybersecurity of our partners and their capacity to combat cybercrime.

### ***Economic Cooperation***

The United States and Australia recognize the importance of foreign trade and investment to job creation, consumer welfare, competitiveness, and innovation in both our countries. We greatly

value our thriving bilateral economic relationship: since the Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA) entered into force in 2005, goods trade between our two countries has increased by 74 percent, and services trade by 48 percent. We are among each other's most important trading partners; the United States is the largest foreign investor in Australia, and Australia's top foreign investment destination is the United States.

The recently-concluded Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is an important opportunity to further deepen the trade and investment ties between the United States and Australia. TPP will expand trade, spur investment, and lift standards throughout the Asia-Pacific. The TPP is strategically important, as it will help us to define and strengthen the rules-based international system and increase economic stability throughout the region. We hope to see the domestic TPP approval processes move forward in both countries as soon as possible, so the agreement can begin to generate benefits for our people.

Australia and the United States have also re-committed, as G20 members, to strengthen the global economy, make global growth more inclusive, enhance the resilience of the international financial system, mobilize investment to raise long-term growth, and implement previous G20 commitments on economic reform and labor markets.

### ***Partners in Innovation***

Australia and the United States share a belief in the power of innovation, science, and technology as a way to grow the economy, create jobs, and expand prosperity. The United States cooperates with Australia to foster innovation across a broad range of issues. U.S. energy companies and technology will help Australia become the world's largest Liquefied Natural Gas exporter by 2018. NASA collaboration with the Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO)—including on the Deep Space Network and the U.S. contribution for two new satellite dishes at Tidbinbilla, Australia to support the Mars Program—continues our joint cooperation that began with our efforts in the 1960's to reach the moon and flourishes today with missions to Mars and Pluto.

The United States' National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council are working together to uncover new ways to understand, treat, prevent, and cure brain disorders like Alzheimer's, autism, and epilepsy. The NIH funds Australian cancer research and collaborates with Australia on pediatric cancer and prevention of cancer in the Pacific islands. The U.S.–Australia Joint Commission on Science and Technology promotes scientific exchanges and collaboration between our two countries.

USAID's Global Development Lab and Australia's InnovationXchange have been working together on innovative approaches to development and have jointly invested in the Global Innovation Fund, a non-profit formed by USAID, Australia and other donors to source and develop innovation with evidence of impact and a pathway to scale.

The United States and Australia are both committed to creating an ideal environment to support innovation and to supporting and enhancing our already-robust cooperation on innovation. One of Prime Minister Turnbull's first major policy initiatives upon taking office was establishing the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA), which emphasizes reforms to encourage

risk taking and investment, collaboration to improve the commercialization of ideas into products, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. Included in NISA is the planned opening of a “landing pad” in Silicon Valley to help Australian innovators and entrepreneurs. President Obama created the first-ever U.S. Strategy for American Innovation in 2009, updated it in 2011, and released a final update in October 2015. The Strategy describes the many policies and programs the U.S. government is undertaking to sustain the world-leading U.S. innovation ecosystem, including making world-leading investments in fundamental research, boosting access to high-quality STEM education, and ensuring the right conditions for a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### ***Shared Energy Initiatives***

The United States and Australia have strong bilateral energy cooperation. U.S. investments in the liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector that will come online in 2016 and 2017 will transform global energy markets and result in Australia becoming the world’s largest LNG exporter.

The United States and Australia are committed to supporting and expanding the Clean Energy Solutions Center, an initiative of the Clean Energy Ministerial. The Solution Center offers no-cost, fast response expert assistance on clean energy policy and finance measures to countries around the world. Post-Conference of the Parties (COP) 21, the Solutions Center will act as a critical component in helping countries implement their Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other climate and clean energy goals.

The United States and Australia are also committed to supporting Mission Innovation, which was announced by the leaders of 20 countries, including the United States and Australia, on November 30. Each participating country is seeking to double its governmental clean energy research and development funding over five years. New investment focuses on transformational clean energy technology innovations that can be scaled to varying economic and energy market conditions that exist in participating countries and in the broader world.

Both governments are committed to nuclear security cooperation, including participation in the U.S. Department of Energy’s and Dutch-hosted January 2016 “Apex Gold,” a ministerial, scenario-based policy discussion for the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit, at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory on January 27-28.

### ***Advancing Cooperation on Marine and Climate Science***

The United States commends Australia’s constructive role in leading the Umbrella Group at the COP-21 international climate change negotiations in Paris in December 2015, and looks forward to future cooperation on reducing carbon emissions.

The United States and Australia both highly value the marine environment, which is critical to global food security and the healthy functioning of the Earth’s climate. Through Memoranda of Understanding between the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Organization (NOAA) and partner Australian agencies—including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Australia Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), and the Bureau of

Meteorology (BoM)—we advance global goals in food security, weather forecasting, climate adaptation, and biodiversity.

The United States seeks further opportunities to cooperate on conservation, which often is led by civil society in the United States and Australia, but which also features engagement between U.S. and Australian governmental agencies responsible for environmental protection and natural resource management. We also note our history of providing assistance to each other during some of the worst wildfire seasons in the past 50 years, including the much-appreciated contributions of Australian firefighters during the 2015 wildfire season in the United States.

### ***Education, including Strengthening Educational Exchanges***

Government and institutional relationships stem from close and cooperative relationships between our citizens. The deep cultural and historical linkages between the United States and Australia are continually refreshed and renewed through educational exchanges and the interaction of students, teachers and institutions from both countries. The United States and Australia maintain a wide-ranging education policy dialogue aimed at ensuring that students in both countries benefit from a high quality education.

The Australian-American Fulbright program was the result of the first official treaty signed between the United States and Australia. The Prime Minister of Australia and the U.S. Ambassador are the Honorary Co-Chairs of the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, which offers approximately 50 scholarships each year to Australian and American citizens to study and undertake research in each other's country. Over the course of its existence, the program has awarded scholarships to nearly 5,000 citizens of both countries. Additionally, each year between 4,500-5,200 youth and professionals participate in the Exchange Visitor Program (EVP), building lasting ties between our two nations.

### ***Partnering in International Development***

The United States reaffirms the importance of development cooperation with Australia, which directly reflects our shared core values and intent to increase regional and global prosperity and security. We share a strong commitment to promote the empowerment of women politically, economically, and socially, and we have both established ambassadors for women and girls to lead government efforts. The United States and Australia continue to work together to advance women's empowerment in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions through regional organizations and joint projects like the Papua New Guinea Women's Business Center.

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