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# Japan to welcome 12 New Colombo Plan Scholars in 2016

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## TK26

### 1 December 2015

A total of 12 New Colombo Plan scholars will study in Japan under the 2016 round of the Australian Government's New Colombo Plan.

"I am delighted Japan will welcome 12 of Australia's best and brightest undergraduate students as New Colombo Plan scholars to live, study and undertake work placements in various cities across Japan," Australian Ambassador to Japan Bruce Miller said.

Alexander Best from Edith Cowan University will study at Kyoto Sangyo University, and plans to undertake an internship with a Japanese sporting association.

Lachlan Kenway from the University of Queensland will study at Waseda University.

Megan Lock from the University of Adelaide will study at Osaka University, and plans to undertake an internship in the field of foreign language education.

Clarence Ma from the University of New South Wales will study at the University of Tokyo, and hopes to undertake an internship with an international or Japanese law firm.

Casey Macfarlane from Griffith University will study at Hiroshima University, and plans to undertake an internship in the field of waste management, specifically recycling management.

Estelle McCabe from Griffith University will study at Saitama University, and plans to undertake a communications internship within the oil and gas sector.

Alexander McLeish from Monash University will study at the University of Tokyo, and plans to undertake internships with international law firms.

Rosemary Menzies from the University of Sydney will study at Kyoto University, and hopes to undertake a laboratory based internship.

Kingsley Nguyen from the University of Western Australia will study at Nagoya University, and hopes to undertake an internship with a major Japanese company.

Diane Salim from the Australian National University will study at the University of Tokyo, and plans to undertake an internship with a leading research physicist in Japan.

Kayla Rain Williams from University of Technology Sydney will study at Yamaguchi University, and plans to undertake an internship with an organisation related to international development in the Pacific.

And Grace Yee Yan Yeung from Griffith University will study at Meio University, and plans to undertake an internship with an international non-profit organisation.

“The strong interest of Australian students in studying in Japan reflects the bonds of friendship and opportunity that exist between Australia and Japan,” the Ambassador said.

New Colombo Plan scholarships are highly prestigious, with only 100 awarded in 2016, and recognise students’ exceptional academic performance, community engagement and commitment to deepening relationships with our neighbours in the Indo-Pacific.

“This talented group of students will be impressive young ambassadors for Australia in the Indo-Pacific region, as they undertake studies, gain industry experience and learn about another culture while fostering friendships and networks that will last a lifetime,” Minister Bishop said.

“Australia is investing in the next generation of leaders who will continue to advance and build on our important bilateral relations in the Indo-Pacific region”.

The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government to lift knowledge of the Indo-Pacific by supporting Australian undergraduate students to study and undertake internships in the region.

The Australian Government has committed \$100 million in new funding over five years to implement the New Colombo Plan.

For more information on the New Colombo Plan, visit

[www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan](http://www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan) or follow @NewColomboPlan on Twitter.

ENDS

# Australia welcomes Japan's security reforms

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**TK22**

**19 September 2015**

I welcome the passage of Japan's security reform legislation through the Japanese Parliament today.

These reforms will allow Japan to make a greater contribution to international peace and stability, including by exercising its UN Charter right to collective self-defence.

Enhanced security cooperation with Japan is a priority for Australia. These reforms will make it easier for us to work with Japan overseas on peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian and disaster relief.

Japan has been an exemplary contributor to peace and stability for seventy years. As Prime Minister Turnbull and Prime Minister Abe confirmed in their telephone conversation yesterday, Australia fully supports reforms that increase Japan's role in our shared interests in regional and international peace and security.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

The Hon Julie Bishop MP

# New Colombo Plan business programs launched

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**TK17**

**24 July 2015**

Today I announce three new initiatives to enable businesses to connect with some of Australia's outstanding young undergraduates, which will enhance Australia's engagement with our region.

The Australian Government's [New Colombo Plan](#) has already given more than 4500 Australian students the opportunity to live, study and work in the Indo-Pacific region.

By the end of 2016, within three years of its establishment, around 10,000 young Australians will have undertaken a study abroad experience under the New Colombo Plan.

Internships and mentorships are a hallmark of the Plan, allowing students to build professional networks, test their skills in real life situations and develop competencies including cross-cultural communication in both public and private sector environments.

The initiatives, announced at today's New Colombo Plan Business Event will allow students to further benefit from these opportunities.

The New Colombo Plan Internship and Mentorship Network will include a secure online portal for businesses to register work opportunities for NCP students. Around 100 internship and mentorship opportunities from businesses have already been listed.

The Mobility Partners Program will foster innovative partnerships between Australian universities and businesses based in Australia and in host countries to create new opportunities for our students.

I am delighted with the private sector's enthusiastic embrace of the New Colombo Plan since its launch in 2013. The Business Champions Initiative will further support business leaders to promote the value of regional study and workplace experiences to students to enhance their future career prospects and Australia's future prosperity.

The inaugural New Colombo Plan Business Champions are:

- ANZ CEO Mike Smith OBE;
- Westpac CEO Brian Hartzler;
- Jetstar Group CEO Jayne Hrdlicka;
- QBE Emerging Markets CEO David Fried;
- GE Australia and New Zealand President and Chief Executive Geoff Culbert;

- Coca-Cola Amatil Group Managing Director Alison Watkins;
- KPMG National Leader Asia Business Group Doug Ferguson;
- Mitsui & Co Director and Executive Vice President Wendy Holdenson; and
- CPA Australia Executive General Manager Education Rob Thomason.

# New Colombo Plan 2016 mobility grants announced

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## TK18

**24 July 2015**

Joint media release: The Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs / The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Minister for Education and Training

More than 5450 Australian students will have the opportunity to live, study and undertake work placements in our region in 2016, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, and the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP announced today.

“The latest round of New Colombo Plan mobility grants will send Australian undergraduate students to 28 different locations in the Indo-Pacific,” Minister Bishop said.

“This will bring the total number of students funded by the New Colombo Plan to more than 10,000 in just the first three years of the program.

“As a result, 10,000 young Australians are learning more about our immediate region and developing skills and understanding that provide new insights and perspectives for their future careers.

“In turn, Australia is investing in the next generation of leaders who will continue to build on our important relationships within our region,” Minister Bishop said.

New Colombo Plan mobility grants are awarded to Australian universities, which then select undergraduate students to participate in study and work-based experiences in the Indo-Pacific region.

Mobility projects are open to students from any discipline, and range from short-term study tours to semester-based study and internships.

“In 2016 New Colombo Plan mobility grants will support students to pursue studies in a diverse range of disciplines including engineering, law, business, nursing, education and agriculture – to name just a few,” Minister Pyne said.

“The New Colombo Plan is increasing education links across the Indo-Pacific, a key ambition of Government reflected in its draft National Strategy for International Education,” Minister Pyne said.

The mobility grant offers will be made to Australian universities in early August, after which full details of projects to be funded will be published at [www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan](http://www.dfat.gov.au/new-colombo-plan)



The Australian Government has committed more than \$100 million in new funding over five years to implement the New Colombo Plan, which includes both the mobility grants program as well as a prestigious scholarships program.

# Promoting Australia's financial services capabilities in Japan and Korea

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## TK16

**8 June 2015**

I will visit Japan and Korea this week to participate in a range of high-level discussions with keygovernment and business representatives on Australia's financial services sector and the Asia Region Funds Passport.

I will be accompanied by a Financial Services Council (FSC) delegation of senior representatives from the Australian financial services industry.

My visit to Japan and Korea in the company of the FSC delegation will be valuable in promoting Australia's financial services strengths and capabilities and to identify future opportunities for growth under the free trade agreements concluded by the Abbott Government.

Australia's strong and growing funds management industry includes \$2 trillion in superannuation funds under management, which is forecast to grow to more than \$9 trillion by 2040. The Government is strongly supportive of the benefits of regional financial services integration, which is why we have been supporting the Asia Region Funds Passport.

The Asia Region Funds Passport is an APEC initiative and will create a regional market for managed investment funds by reducing regulatory barriers and creating a standard set of rules.

The Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement is a significant development for Japan's and Australia's financial services sectors. Under the agreement, our nations will allow financial services providers to supply services that, in the past, were restricted to domestic financial institutions.

In Japan, I will be speaking at a luncheon hosted by the Australia Japan Business Cooperation Committee and meeting with Japanese industry to discuss regional financial services integration.

I will also be holding bilateral meetings with government counterparts to discuss the Asia Region Funds Passport and implementation of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement.

In Korea, I will be meeting with Korean financial services industry representatives to discuss the challenges facing our financial services industries, particularly in regard to superannuation and retirement incomes.

# Minister for Defence – Inaugural visit to Japan concludes

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## TK15

**5 June 2015**

Today I concluded my first visit to Japan as Minister for Defence.

Japan is an important regional and security partner for Australia. We share strategic interests, common capabilities and a shared alliance with the United States.

During my visit I had the opportunity to speak with Prime Minister Abe, Defence Minister Nakatani and Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Miyazawa on a range of issues of strategic importance to both our countries.

Minister Nakatani and I reviewed progress on expanding our defence cooperation ahead of the 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministers' meeting to be held in Australia later this year.

We discussed in detail the outcomes of the Trilateral Defence Ministers' Meeting, held with Minister Nakatani and our United States counterpart, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, during the course of the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Australia welcomes to the new Japan-United States Defence Cooperation Guidelines and the opportunities this will provide for Australia, Japan and the United States to work together on capacity building initiatives in the Indo-Pacific.

Minister Nakatani and I also discussed Japan's ongoing efforts to strengthen its capacity to proactively contribute to regional and global peace and security.

While in Japan, I toured the Kawasaki and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries commercial shipyards in Kobe.

The Future Submarine Programme is the largest Defence procurement program in Australia's history and represents an investment in the order of \$50 billion in Australia's security.

These costs will be subject to refinement through the competitive evaluation process. A significant proportion of this investment will be spent in Australia.

The Government expects that significant work will be undertaken in Australia during the build phase of the future submarine including combat system integration, design assurance and land based testing. This will result in the creation at least 500 new high-skill jobs in Australia, the majority of which will be based in South Australia.

# Minister for Defence – Visit to Japan

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## TK14

### 1 June 2015

From 2-4 June 2015, I will visit Japan to meet with my Japanese counterpart, Defence Minister Gen Nakatani. This will be my first visit to Japan as Minister for Defence.

Japan is an important regional defence and security partner for Australia. Our nations share a commitment to the rule of law, regional peace and security and mutual alliances with the United States.

Australia welcomes and supports Japan's ongoing efforts to strengthen its capacity to proactively contribute to regional and global peace and security.

These efforts allow Japan to continue to be an active participant in supporting regional peace and stability and provide our countries with greater scope to work together.

Reflecting our common interests, last year saw the further development of practical Australia-Japan bilateral defence cooperation, including in the fields of defence science and technology, and enhanced participation in military exercises and strategic dialogue.

Australia is also committed to working with Japan to support regional security through enhance trilateral cooperation with the United States.

As announced by the Government on 20 February this year, Japan had been identified as a potential international partner for Australia's Future Submarine Program. I welcome Japan's announcement on 18 May that it would participate in the process.

While in Japan, I will tour the Kawasaki/Mitsubishi Heavy Industries commercial shipyard in Kobe.

For Australian industry to have the best opportunity to maximise their involvement in the Future Submarine Program they need to work with an international partner.

The Future Submarine Program is the largest Defence procurement programme in Australia's history and represents a \$50 billion investment in Australia's safety and security. It is vital that we get this program right so our Navy has the right capability to support them.

## Visit to Singapore, Korea, Japan

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### TK13

#### 20 May 2015

I will visit Singapore, Korea and Japan from 20-23 May to advance Australia's strategic and economic interests with our important regional partners.

In Singapore, I will meet with Prime Minister Lee and Foreign Minister Shanmugam to discuss our joint strategy to enhance our security, economic and people-to-people cooperation.

This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Singapore's independence and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Australian-Singapore relations. To mark these occasions, I will formally open a koala exhibit at Singapore Zoo, with four koalas gifted to Singapore for the commemorative year. I will also launch "50 Bridges", a programme of events to promote Australian arts, cultural and community interests in Singapore.

In South Korea, I will attend the annual MIKTA meeting of foreign ministers from Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey and Australia. The meeting will enhance cooperation on countering terrorism and foreign fighters, address cyber security threats and advance the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

I will also meet with President Park Geun-hye and Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se to discuss the Australia-Korea FTA ratified last December as well as ways to enhance our ties with South Korea, a key strategic partner in Asia and our third-largest export market, valued at over \$20 billion.

In Japan, I will attend the seventh Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM) to be hosted by Prime Minister Abe. This meeting will bring together Pacific Island leaders in Fukushima to discuss challenges facing our region, including disaster risk reduction and strengthening economic ties.

I also look forward to meeting with Prime Minister Abe and my counterpart, Foreign Minister Kishida, to discuss our strategic partnership and capitalise on the gains already made by the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, which is already benefiting Australian consumers and exporters.

# Australia-Japan Foundation Board appointments

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## TK12

**19 May 2015**

I welcome the appointment of the Hon Mr Richard Court AC, Mr Peter Cleary, Dr Bronwyn Evans, Ms Debra Hazleton and Professor Veronica Taylor to the Board of the Australia-Japan Foundation (AJF).

Japan is our most important strategic and economic partner in Asia. The AJF brings together eminent Australians with public and private sector expertise to advise the Government on how to strengthen our cooperation with Japan. This is critical to advancing Australia's interests in a stable and prosperous region.

Mr Court is a former Premier of Western Australia, who has worked tirelessly to advance Australia's relationship with Japan. His exceptional contribution was recognised by the Japanese Government in 2008 when it awarded Mr Court the Gold and Silver Star within the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun.

Mr Cleary will bring long and valuable business expertise to the board. He is currently Vice President of Santos and an Executive Committee member of the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee.

Ms Hazleton is a Japan specialist and is the first foreign General Manager of a corporate division of Mizuho Financial Group, the second-largest bank in Japan.

Dr Evans, who is the CEO of Standards Australia, will enhance the board's expertise in science diplomacy and will help build links with Japan in technology and innovation.

Professor Taylor, also a Japan specialist brings to this role extensive academic experience in the region, and is well placed to drive the board's ambitious education agenda. She is the Dean of Australian National University (ANU) College of Asia and the Pacific. Professor Taylor has also served as the Director of the Japan Institute at the ANU and Visiting Professor of Australian Studies at the University of Tokyo.

I look forward to working with the new AJF Board, which also includes the Chair, Mr Murray McLean AO, Dr Chiaki Ajioka and Mr Doug Hall AM.

# Minister for Defence – New United States and Japan Defence Cooperation Guidelines

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## **TK11**

**29 April 2015**

Australia welcomes the announcement on 27 April 2015 by the United States and Japan of new Defence Cooperation Guidelines.

Defence cooperation between Japan and the United States has made a positive contribution to security and prosperity in our region for decades.

The new Guidelines recognise Japan's growing contribution to promoting a peaceful and stable international security environment, and reflect the changing nature of defence engagement to include cyber, space and global cooperation.

In particular, I welcome the United States and Japan's commitment to expanded multilateral and trilateral cooperation with Australia, and for closer cooperation with Australia on capacity building activities in South East Asia.

The Guidelines also support a more seamless defence partnership between the Japan Self-Defence Forces and the United States Armed Forces.

# FTAs boosting the bottom line of Aussie business

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## TK09

**1 April 2015**

Tariffs on Australian exports to Japan have been cut for the second time this year, giving businesses – large and small – an even greater advantage in this lucrative Asian market, Trade and Investment Minister Andrew Robb said.

Mr Robb is marking today's milestone with a visit to Tasmanian business Abalone Farms Australia, who he explained, is already enjoying the benefits of the agreement.

"Under the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement – or JAEPA – tariffs of 7 and 9.6 per cent on their products have already been eliminated, giving them a significant advantage over competitors in the Japanese market," Mr Robb said.

Based in Bicheno, Abalone Farms Australia's Director Jonathan Lillie said given Japan is by far their largest export market, the agreement has delivered significant results.

"Our exports to Japan have been increasing steadily in recent years; our parent company Southseas Abalone has gone from exporting 170 tonnes to Japan in 2014, to an expected volume of 270 tonnes by 2017.

"Following the drop in export costs to Japan, we're now exploring how we can capitalise on the tariff reductions delivered by the Free Trade Agreement with China," Mr Lillie said.

Mr Robb encouraged other businesses to follow Mr Lillie's lead and explore the potential opportunities created by the powerful trifecta of agreements with China, Japan and Korea – Australia's first, second and fourth largest trading partners.

"While many exporters – such as Abalone Farms Australia – are fully aware of the terms of the agreements, I recognise there are those that are not certain about what the FTAs mean for their business. That's why the government has begun rolling out a series of seminars around the country to help both existing and potential exporters, understand the agreements and the opportunities they create," Mr Robb said.

"Work is also well underway on developing an online portal which will provide users with the information they need – including a comprehensive tariff finder – to help make informed decisions about trading internationally."



More than 97 per cent of Australia's goods exports to Japan will receive preferential access, or enter duty-free, once the agreement is fully implemented. JAEPA is the most liberalising trade agreement Japan has ever signed; delivering ongoing benefits for goods, services and investment exports well into the future.

# Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

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## TK08

**30 March 2015**

THE HON. Tony Abbott MP, Prime Minister / THE HON. Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs /  
THE HON. Joe Hockey MP, Treasurer

The Government is today announcing it intends to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which would allow Australia to participate (as a prospective founding member) in negotiations to set up the bank.

The Government has discussed the AIIB extensively with China and other key partners inside and outside the region.

Good progress has been made on the Bank's design, governance and transparency over the past few months, but we still have issues that we will address through ongoing consultations.

Key matters to be resolved before Australia considers joining the AIIB include the Bank's Board of Directors having authority over key investment decisions, and that no one country control the bank.

Recognising the pressing need for infrastructure investment in the Asia-Pacific, Australia made infrastructure a priority during our G20 presidency in 2014.

Working with other key multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank, the AIIB has the potential to play a valuable role in addressing infrastructure needs and boosting economic growth in the region with potential benefits for Australia.

# Minister in Japan for third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

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## TK07

### 12 March 2015

Tomorrow I will arrive in Japan ahead of the third United Nations' World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (3WCDDRR).

Since 1999, Australia has played an active part in international efforts to reduce disaster risk and build resilience within our region, and at home through the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

It is expected that around 18 heads of state, 100 ministers, 230 non-government organisations, 20 inter-governmental groups, 15 UN heads of agency and more than 3500 delegates will attend.

Participants will be working to finalise the Sendai Framework, the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction.

Four years ago the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami caused major damage to the host city of Sendai and the Miyagi Prefecture.

This serves as a reminder of the responsibilities we all have in contributing to a more disaster resilient tomorrow.

During the conference I will visit Minami Sanriku – an area devastated by the disaster – to honour those who lost their lives, learn about the Japanese reconstruction efforts and recognise Australia's significant contribution to recovery work in the region.

Leading the Australian delegation at the Conference, I will assist with negotiations on the Sendai Framework, participate in a ministerial roundtable discussion about reconstructing after disasters – and building back better, deliver Australia's plenary statement, and partake in a number of bilateral meetings with ministerial counterparts from other countries to increase cooperation on emergency management.

At the ministerial roundtable, I will speak about the relocation of Grantham in Queensland after it was devastated in 2011 by flood. The federal and state governments partnered in an \$18 million initiative to move the town to higher ground with 116 residents swapping their land. Only two years later, Grantham was flooded again, but only three homes were damaged and the new estate remained flood-free. It is estimated that approximately \$30 million was saved from this event alone.

Further, I will be showcasing Australia's Emergency Alert system, a world class, fully inclusive warning system that Australia's emergency services agencies use to send warning messages to telephones of people whose communities are in danger.

This highly valued public-safety capability is relied on by emergency services agencies and the public alike. Since its launch in 2009, Australia's States and Territories have used Emergency Alert for a total of 1,277 campaigns to send nearly 11 million warning messages.

Following the 3WCDDRR, I will return to Australia and ensure our work domestically and regionally incorporates the newly adopted international objectives.

The 3WCDDRR will run from March 14-18 in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan.

Before returning to Australia I will also visit Hong Kong before to undertake bilateral meetings with my counterparts to discuss key law enforcement matters and areas for greater law enforcement cooperation, including on transnational crime and anti-corruption measures.

Further information on the UN Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction can be found at:  
<http://www.wcdr.org>.

# Minister for Defence – Strategic direction of the Future Submarine Program

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## TK06

**20 February 2015**

Today the Government announces the acquisition strategy for the Future Submarine Program. This announcement sets out further details of the competitive evaluation process that will be undertaken by the Department of Defence.

Submarines are an essential component of Australia's naval capability and the Government will ensure that the future submarine provides the best possible capability and value for money for Australian taxpayers while maximising the involvement of Australian industry.

Submarines are the most complex, sensitive and expensive Defence capability acquisition a Government can make.

Australia's national security and \$1.6 trillion economy depend on secure sea lanes. We need the best possible submarine to protect our trade and support our maritime security.

It must be delivered in time to avoid a capability gap in the mid-2020s when the Collins Class submarine is scheduled to be retired from service. The decisions we make on the Future Submarine Program will determine what kind of capability we have to defend Australia and Australian interests into the 2040s and beyond.

The process outlined by the Government today provides a pathway for Australian industry to maximise its involvement in the program, whilst not compromising capability, cost, program schedule or risk.

The Government expects that significant work will be undertaken in Australia during the build phase of the future submarine including combat system integration, design assurance and land based testing. This will result in the creation at least 500 new high-skill jobs in Australia, the majority of which will be based in South Australia.

The Future Submarine Program is the largest Defence procurement program in Australia's history and represents an investment in the order of \$50 billion in Australia's security. These costs will be subject to refinement through the competitive evaluation process. A significant proportion of this investment will be spent in Australia during the lifetime of the future submarine.

Successive governments have used various kinds of competitive evaluation processes for major Defence capability procurements.

As part of this competitive evaluation process, the Department of Defence will seek proposals from potential partners for:

- a) Pre-concept designs based on meeting Australian capability criteria;
- b) Options for design and build overseas, in Australia, and/or a hybrid approach;
- c) Rough order of magnitude (ROM) costs and schedule for each option; and
- d) Positions on key commercial issues, for example intellectual property rights and the ability to use and disclose technical data.

In addition to this – and on the advice of Defence – the Government has endorsed a set of key strategic requirements for our future submarines:

- a) Range and endurance similar to the Collins Class submarine;
- b) Sensor performance and stealth characteristics that are superior to the Collins Class submarine; and
- c) The combat system and heavyweight torpedo jointly developed between the United States and Australia as the preferred combat system and main armament.

Defence advises that for Australian industry to have the best opportunity to maximise their involvement in the Future Submarine Program, it needs to work with an international partner.

Based on work completed by Defence, France, Germany, and Japan have emerged as potential international partners. All three countries have proven submarine design and build capabilities and are currently producing submarines.

France, Germany and Japan will be invited to participate in this competitive evaluation process that will assess their ability to partner with Australia to develop a Future Submarine that meets our capability requirements.

The Department of Defence will invite potential international partners to seek opportunities for Australian industry participation in the Future Submarine Program.

The competitive evaluation process will help the Government balance important considerations including capability, cost, schedule, and risk. Interoperability with our alliance partner, the United States, will also be a fundamental consideration.

The competitive evaluation process will take around ten months, after which an international partner will be selected for Australia's Future Submarine Program. Further details about Australian industry involvement are also expected to be known at that point.

The competitive evaluation process will ensure that capability, cost, schedule, and key strategic considerations, along with Australian industry involvement, are carefully and methodically considered, and avoid unnecessary delays to the Future Submarine Program.

The Department of Defence will soon be holding industry briefings to inform Australian industry about the process and how they can engage with potential international partners.

An expert advisory panel will also be appointed to oversee the competitive evaluation process. Further details about this will be announced once individual appointments are confirmed.

# Ambassador Miller discusses bilateral exchanges in Hokkaido

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## TK05

### 13 February 2015

During his visit to Hokkaido (4-7 February), Australian Ambassador, Mr Bruce Miller, delivered two presentations outlining Australia's commitment to bilateral educational cooperation and collaboration.

He delivered a well-received speech at the University of Hokkaido on the Australian government's commitment to the Tohoku region of Japan following the tsunami and earthquake of 2011 attended by more than 50 students, including Australian students studying at the University of Hokkaido. He outlined the range of grassroots community support provided by Australia to the people of northeastern Japan, but focussed on addressing the challenge of long-term, sustainable reconstruction through economic growth.

To demonstrate how Australia and Japan are investing in human resources and promoting people-to-people links he highlighted the New Colombo Plan, which saw 450 Australian students come to Japan in 2014. These students not only learnt about Japan and its culture, but many gained valuable professional experience through internships. He subsequently met two of the Australian exchange students studying at Hokkaido University.

The Ambassador also met three of the Japan Exchange Teachers living in Hokkaido who formed the Australian team taking part in the Sapporo International Snow Festival snow sculpture competition. These young women were great ambassadors for Australia and Mr Miller said on several occasions that he hoped many of these young Australians would contribute to the recovery efforts while in Japan, through volunteer activities.

The Ambassador also gave a speech to Noboribetsu Akebi Secondary School, one of only three 'Super Global High Schools' in Hokkaido. He spoke at length about the value the Government places on exchange programs like the NCP, and the importance of a globally focussed education to develop, in Australia's case, Asia-literacy. The speech drew on the Ambassador's personal educational links with Japan – he participated in exchange programs at High School and at University, and was then posted three times to the Australian Embassy.

Mr Miller met with eight students who will undertake a study tour to Southern Cross University in March. As it is a rural high school with strong agricultural links, the students were eager to learn more about Australia's agricultural policies, and asked astute questions on the Japan Australia Economic



Partnership Agreement and the Trans Pacific Partnership. The Ambassador also discussed Australia's cultural, tourism, economic and agricultural ties with Japan.

# Murder of Kenji Goto

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**TK04**

**1 February 2015**

Prime Minister

Early this morning a video was released which appears to show the murder of Kenji Goto, the second Japanese hostage held by the Daesh death cult.

As Prime Minister Abe has said, this is a despicable act of terrorism. My thoughts and prayers are with Mr Goto's family and friends as they deal with the anguish caused by this atrocity, in particular with his daughters who have had their father stolen from them.

The killings of Mr Goto and Haruna Yukawa are the latest outrages designed to intimidate the international community from taking action to resolve the crisis in Iraq and Syria. I welcome Prime Minister Abe's resolve not to yield to terrorism and his determination that Japan will continue to expand its humanitarian assistance, including food aid and medical support.

Australia will continue to do what it can to combat this death cult. The Australian Defence Force is working with our partners to disrupt, degrade and ultimately defeat this threat to the peoples of Iraq and Syria, the international community and our domestic security.

# Prime Minister's press statement about Japanese hostages

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**TK03**

**25 January 2015**

Parliament House, Canberra

We have had more very bad news out of the Middle East.

It seems that one of the Japanese hostages has been executed by the Daesh death cult. This is an absolute atrocity – an absolute atrocity.

It is hard to imagine the anguish that that hostage's family would be going through, the anguish that the other hostage's family would now be going through and indeed the anguish that the people of Japan would now be suffering.

All this means is it's more important than ever to do everything we can to disrupt and degrade the death cult. That's all it is – a death cult. It is in love with death. It glories in killing people. It is a sign of the dark age which is descended upon large parts of Eastern Syria and Northern Iraq.

I am pleased and proud that the Australian Armed Forces are doing what they can in the Middle East right now to contribute to disrupting and degrading this death cult.

I am also proud of the work that our security forces are doing here at home to ensure that people influenced by this death cult are not in a position to do us harm.

## Japanese hostages

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**TK02**

**22 January 2015**

Prime Minister

This afternoon I spoke with Prime Minister Abe to convey Australia's solidarity and support for Japan.

Australia utterly condemns the actions of Daesh and its threat to murder two Japanese citizens.

It is an outrage for Japan to have the lives of two citizens threatened by this murderous group.

Australia stands with Japan as it faces this horrifying situation and calls on the captors to release these men and all other hostages.

I re-affirmed Australia's commitment to contribute to the international effort to disrupt and degrade Daesh.

Australia and Japan will never sacrifice our values and our freedom in the face of terrorism.

## 7 days until AFC Asian Football Cup kicks off

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### TK01

#### 2 January 2015

Fifteen nations will join together with Australia's Socceroos for the AFC Asian Football 2015 when it kicks off on 9 January in Melbourne.

All Australians together with Japan will be glued to our television screens as our teams play for the oldest, largest and most prestigious football event in Asia.

Some of the best footballers in the world, including some of the most promising young and upcoming stars, will participate in 32 matches in five cities: Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra and Newcastle, across 23 days.

It will be the first time that Australia hosts the tournament, and it will also be the first time the AFC Asian Cup will be hosted outside the continent of Asia.

The AFC Asian Football Cup 2015 is not only an opportunity to show the world Australia's sporting pedigree but also welcome our neighbours and friends to Australia.

For further information on the AFC Asian Cup: [www.afcasiacup.com](http://www.afcasiacup.com)