

Enhanced Strategic Partnership between Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany

Germany and Australia are strategic partners with joint global responsibility. Lifting our partnership to a new level comes at a time of increased strategic convergence and mutual solidarity and assistance. Our shared values, the COVID-19 pandemic and the responses to it, as well as the challenges to international rules, norms and institutions, underpin and inform the strategic dimension of our partnership. We share a deep commitment to universal human rights, a rules-based international order, free trade, resolute climate action, effective multilateralism, freedom of navigation and overflight, and open, inclusive and resilient societies. We will jointly promote a more peaceful, secure and safer world, democracy, the rule of law, global education and gender equality.

Both our countries are facing regional fragility and geopolitical tensions. An increase in global risks and threats, including pandemics, terrorism, malicious cyber activities, foreign interference, threats to rules-based trade, disinformation, transnational organised crime, irregular migration, weapons proliferation, the degradation of the global climate and natural resources, calls for concerted action.

Today, Germany and Australia stand firmly united as strategic partners and close friends. We are determined to both defend and advance our common values and interests. To that end, we will significantly intensify our bilateral and multilateral cooperation, building on the joint institutions, exchanges and formats we have established in all areas of our bilateral relationship over the past years.

Following these principles and on the basis of our long-standing partnership, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Government of Australia, hereinafter referred to as the “two sides”, commit to renew and elevate the Strategic Partnership established in 2013 to an “Enhanced Strategic Partnership”, underpinned by a two-year action plan annexed to this document.

In order to build this new Enhanced Strategic Partnership, we commit to regular exchanges between leaders, between Foreign and Defence Ministers, jointly as 2+2 meetings where possible, and between Trade Ministers. Australian and German Foreign Ministers will review progress biennially.

I. Lifting the Strategic Partnership to a new level

The uncertainties and challenges that Germany and Australia are exposed to in the 21st century demonstrate that no country in the world can successfully address these challenges on its own. Germany and Australia will intensify consultations at all levels in order to promote common awareness and identify opportunities for joint action – both bilaterally and within the framework of multilateral structures and institutions.

Both sides will intensify their consultations on regional and global issues, including on regional security and defence policy, support for the multilateral system, and free and open trade. Germany and Australia aim to pave the way for a multi-layered security partnership which will include dealing with threats to cyber security, foreign interference and strengthening the resilience of our societies and economies.

Germany and Australia will continue and enhance their well-established cooperation in the fields of trade and investment, science and education, and promote greater inclusivity in these fields. Both sides support the timely conclusion of an ambitious EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement.

II. Increasing strategic convergence in the Indo-Pacific

The shift in the global strategic and economic balance toward the Indo-Pacific has brought with it both economic opportunity and threats to stability. Germany and Australia have each adopted policy guidelines and strategies for the Indo-Pacific to address these dynamics. Both sides are committed to working together to pursue their respective policies in the region in order to increase the scope for coordination and cooperation.

Australia and Germany will work together, and with states in the region as well as the EU and its Member States, to support sovereignty, the rule of law and human rights in the Indo-Pacific. The two countries will work towards an open and inclusive region where all states, large and small, contribute to protecting and promoting international law while reinforcing institutions that guide cooperation and peaceful dispute resolution. Both countries strongly support ASEAN's unity and centrality as well as the principles set out in ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Germany and Australia stand firm on the adherence to international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, freedom of navigation and overflight, and unimpeded and rules-based trade.

Both sides will work toward greater engagement in regional security and enhance their security and defence cooperation, including through training and exercises, in particular in the maritime domain and in partnership with countries in the region. Germany and Australia will work together on capacity-building projects in the Indo-Pacific.

Germany and Australia will continue to support a stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific through their respective development cooperation activities. Both countries are determined to coordinate their support and development cooperation with the region, in line with our commitments to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The two countries will coordinate efforts to promote the development of high-quality infrastructure in the region, including by ensuring transparency and sustainability and mobilising private sector finance. Australia and Germany will work to end exploitation in global supply chains and promote socially equitable and environmentally sustainable growth. Both sides will also work with countries of the Indo-Pacific to promote

circular economies, reduce marine litter, protect biological diversity and address climate change impacts.

III. Strengthening economic, scientific and technological cooperation

Germany and Australia have a shared interest in adapting our societies and economies to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, in particular by working towards effective action against climate change, a new energy economy and digital transformation. Both sides are committed to continuing and deepening their strategic energy partnership, especially by intensifying collaboration on hydrogen from renewable energy, allowing for lasting cooperation along the entire value chain. We will advance synergies between research and industry and make full use of mechanisms such as the Joint Economic Committee as well as the Australian-German Energy and Resources Working Groups to lend our support to bilateral cooperation, in particular in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, low emissions technology, and the supply of critical minerals.

Germany and Australia will promote intensified exchange in particular in the areas of artificial intelligence, Industry 4.0, Smart Cities, Work 4.0, and biotechnology. In light of Germany's and Australia's efforts to strengthen their capacity to address global cyber and critical technology challenges, both sides will share best practices and experiences in promoting and reinforcing an open, free, safe and secure cyberspace. To support economic growth and innovation, both sides will work to influence the design, development and use of digital technologies in line with democratic values and principles, including in the setting of globally interoperable standards. By joining forces and enhancing scientific and technological cooperation, our countries can combine expertise and comparative advantages.

Both sides are committed to growing efficient and successful economic cooperation to foster bilateral trade and investment and to participation in each other's national trade fairs.

IV. Protecting the global rules-based order through strengthened cooperation in multilateral institutions

Germany and Australia reaffirm their conviction that the major challenges of our time, by their nature and global scope, cannot be addressed by countries individually and must be tackled jointly and multilaterally. Both sides will support multilateral approaches, in particular within the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly and the World Health Organization, within the G20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and in disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and export control regimes. Both sides are committed to reform of the World Trade Organization as the central pillar of the multilateral, rules-based trading system. They are also united in their resolve to promote nuclear disarmament against adverse trends.

Germany and Australia will further strengthen their engagement for strong and effective multilateral cooperation as an indispensable foundation to secure inclusive peace, stability and prosperity, including in the framework of the Alliance for Multilateralism. We will marshal our collective efforts to ensure multilateral institutions are fit for purpose, effective, open, transparent and accountable. Both sides will work together to support human rights for all, including women and girls, people with disability, LGBTI, indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse peoples.

Signed in duplicate at Canberra and Berlin on 10 June 2021 in the English and German language, both texts having equal validity.

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Annex: Cooperation Activities

In support of the common strategic interests outlined in the Enhanced Strategic Partnership, Australia and Germany will pursue the following two-year action plan:

1. Lifting the Strategic Partnership to a new level

- 1.1 Deepen bilateral contact at senior political levels
 - a. Regular leader-level exchanges
 - b. Regular ministerial exchanges between respective Foreign and Defence Ministers, jointly as 2+2 meetings when possible, and Trade Ministers (Joint Economic Committee).
- 1.2 Convene annual strategic dialogues between senior officials on the Indo-Pacific, National Security, Defence, and bilateral relationship.
- 1.3 Broaden annual consultations between foreign ministries on multilateral cooperation, including arms control/non-proliferation, international legal issues, and policy planning.
- 1.4 Continue regular bilateral strategic dialogues between defence ministries on strategic policy and defence materiel.
- 1.5 Continue 1.5 track dialogues, partnering with German and Australian think tanks.
- 1.6 Continue formal exchanges of foreign ministry officers.
- 1.7 Foreign Ministers will review progress on the implementation of the action plan biennially.

2. Increasing strategic convergence in the Indo-Pacific

New

- 2.1 Encourage greater coordination of efforts to support economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.
- 2.2 Regular exchanges on the strategic outlook for the Indo-Pacific and Europe.
- 2.3 Hold practical exchanges on respective development priorities at senior officials and working levels covering climate change, cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and Africa, multilateral cooperation, and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2.4 Coordinate support for ASEAN centrality and engagement.
- 2.5 Undertake capacity building efforts in the Indo-Pacific
 - a. Strengthen Southeast Asian states' resilience, independence and cohesion
 - b. Encourage quality infrastructure investment in the Indo-Pacific
 - c. Support the activities of the Mekong River Commission
 - d. Seek opportunities for cooperating on key technologies with Indo-Pacific partners including Singapore, South Korea, Japan and India.

Ongoing

- 2.6 Ensure high-level representation at Pacific Islands Forum summit meetings (Australia as a member; Germany as a dialogue partner).
- 2.7 Expand cooperation with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- 2.8 Enhance cooperation between armed forces, and establish a regular deployment of German Defence services in the Indo-Pacific.

3. Strengthening economic, scientific and technological cooperation

Economic ties:

New

- 3.1 Support the conclusion and implementation of the EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement.
- 3.2 Facilitate bilateral investment through trade promotion agencies.

Ongoing

- 3.3 Use annual meetings of the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) with private sector participation to drive the bilateral economic cooperation agenda and identify key priorities and new engagement opportunities.
- 3.4 Strengthen cooperation through the Australian-German Energy and Resources Working Groups and the joint feasibility study into a future supply chain for hydrogen from renewable sources (HySupply).
- 3.5 Cooperate on critical minerals and diversifying supply chains.
- 3.6 Support greater private sector cooperation on the digital economy, smart city technologies, advanced manufacturing and Industry 4.0, including the existing cooperation between the Australian Industry 4.0 Advanced Manufacturing Forum and the German Plattform Industrie 4.0.
- 3.7 Strengthen cooperation to ensure international standards, especially in relation to new technologies, are developed in ways consistent with democratic principles and maintain an open economy.

Environmental protection, climate and research links:

New

- 3.8 Expand bilateral exchange and cooperation on practical actions and policy measures to meet obligations under the Paris Agreement, including emissions reductions and the role of low emissions technologies.
- 3.9 Establish exchanges on circular economies and recycling, pollution of the oceans and reducing marine litter, low emissions technologies, and sustainable supply chains.
- 3.10 Establish a Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence.
- 3.11 Continue the Australia-Germany Joint Research Cooperation Scheme.
- 3.12 Explore a joint PhD program between the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and the Victorian State Government.
- 3.13 Explore opportunities to enhance Antarctic cooperation.

- 3.14 Support participation of the German research and innovation community in the Australian Government Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program by providing linkages with current CRCs and CRC projects, including in low carbon and clean technology areas.

Ongoing

- 3.15 Continue to hold biennial Australia-Germany Joint Science and Technology Meetings to expand bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest.
- 3.16 Support international climate mitigation and adaptation measures, including climate finance as well as Pacific development priorities.
- 3.17 Advance cooperation on space at the government and industry levels.
- 3.18 Strengthen cooperation and networks between universities and research institutions.
- 3.19 Intensify dialogue on digital transformation among others with Japan, India and South Korea.

Cultural and education activities:

New

- 3.20 Collaborate on women's economic empowerment initiatives and exchange best practices on government-led programs to support women in leadership.
- 3.21 Co-develop screen projects of cultural significance.
- 3.22 Joint engagement to progress establishment of an Institute for German and European Studies at the Australian National University in cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Ongoing

- 3.23 Expand the exchange of information on the future of the media in a digital society.
- 3.24 Continue dialogue and facilitation of the repatriation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestral remains and cultural heritage material.

Defence, national security and resilience activities:

New

- 3.25 Cooperate on cyber, critical and emerging technology, online safety and on 5G use cases in industrial settings.
- 3.26 Finalise a Memorandum of Understanding between Germany's Ministry of Defence and Australia's Defence Science and Technology Group.
- 3.27 Finalise a Declaration of Intent for a Military Space Partnership.
- 3.28 Cooperate on building security and confidence in the new domain of outer space by actively engaging in international processes on promoting responsible behaviour.
- 3.29 Increase co-operation on countering foreign interference and building societal resilience, and enhance coordination on countering disinformation.

Ongoing

- 3.30 Exchange best practice and guidelines for countering foreign interference in critical and emerging technologies and in the research and education sectors.

- 3.31 Continue bilateral exchanges on Strategic Communication and deepen coordination on rules and norms guiding emerging technologies.
- 3.32 Support ongoing coordination on international maritime security issues, including legal aspects of international maritime security and civil maritime security.
- 3.33 Finalise and implement a new Agreement on the Exchange and Reciprocal Protection of Classified Information.
- 3.34 Exchange best practice and strategies on Counter-Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism under the Strategic Dialogue on National Security.

4. Protecting the global rules-based order through strengthened cooperation in multilateral institutions

New

- 4.1 Cooperate on leadership elections for key multilateral institutions and international standard-setting bodies.
- 4.2 Cooperate on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including supporting a successful outcome at the tenth Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.
- 4.3 Coordination of respective positions on international standards for biosecure international travel and emerging technologies.
- 4.4 Cooperate in multilateral fora to address forced labour and other forms of exploitation in global supply chains and to advance the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Ongoing

- 4.5 Strengthen cooperation in the United Nations and attached agencies and support reform efforts in specialised agencies.
- 4.6 Promote the protection of human rights, including through the Human Rights Council.
- 4.7 Collaborate on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including sexual violence in conflict.
- 4.8 Strengthen cooperation in the World Health Organisation, International Telecommunication Union, International Energy Agency and in the G20.
- 4.9 Strengthen cooperation in the Alliance for Multilateralism including with partners in the Indo-Pacific.
- 4.10 Intensify collaboration on wildlife issues and in the World Heritage Committee.