



**THE HON. MALCOLM TURNBULL MP  
PRIME MINISTER**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

4 April 2017

**Outcomes of President Ghani's visit to Australia**

It has been an honour to welcome President Ashraf Ghani to Australia this week, the first sitting President of Afghanistan to visit our nation.

President Ghani's visit has highlighted the strong and enduring links between the Afghan and Australian people, including through the service in Afghanistan of the men and women of the Australian Defence Force, diplomats and civilians.

This historic visit has also underscored the growing partnership between our nations and has been a valuable opportunity to discuss our ongoing security and development cooperation.

Since 2001 we have supported Afghanistan in its efforts to tackle terrorism and build a stronger, more stable and resilient nation.

Afghanistan has made real progress during this period, particularly in education, healthcare, women's empowerment and human rights – improving the everyday lives of Afghans.

As part of the international coalition, we are continuing our commitment to Afghanistan with ADF personnel currently deployed to support the NATO-led Train, Advise and Assist Resolute Support mission. This includes annual support for Afghanistan's National Security and Defence Forces (ANSDF).

To date we have provided approximately USD \$360 million through the Afghan National Army Trust Fund to help equip and sustain the ANSDF. This support will continue, with an additional USD \$80 million per annum through to 2020. Alongside the international community, Australia renewed this commitment at the 2016 NATO Leader's Summit in Warsaw.

Defence is a long-standing area of cooperation between our nations. I am pleased to announce that Australia remains committed to the successful Redwing Counter Improvised Explosive Device programme, and will continue to support the refurbishment of Afghan Mi-17 helicopters. For the first time, Defence will also sponsor two Afghan officer cadets to attend Royal Military College Duntroon.

President Ghani's visit has been fruitful and culminated in enhanced cooperation across a number of fields.

During this visit, our governments signed a memorandum of understanding for a Afghanistan-Australia Development Partnership 2017-2020 (\$320 million over 4 years, 2017-2020), re-affirming Australia's funding commitments made at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan (October 2016).

Under this Partnership, we agreed to establish new areas of cooperation, including an economic infrastructure advisory facility to scope and develop critical economic infrastructure in partnership with international development banks. We also agreed a range of measures to empower women and girls, improve agricultural productivity and the management of water, train Afghan civil servants and support anti-corruption initiatives.

And we signed a new agreement between Geoscience Australia and the Afghanistan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum to strengthen scientific and technical cooperation in earth sciences to help advance the sustainable management of Afghanistan's energy, mineral and water resources.

Australia is proud to work with Afghanistan as it strives to become more prosperous, secure and self-reliant.

**Media contact:**

Prime Minister's Office:

Press Office – (+61 2) 6277 7744