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U.S. Department of State Diplomacy in Action

Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) 2011 Joint Communiqué

Media Note

Office of the Spokesperson

San Francisco, CA

September 15, 2011

The U.S.-Australia alliance is an anchor of stability, security and prosperity in the world. Forged by our shared sacrifice during the Second World War and affirmed in the midst of the Cold War, our alliance has succeeded in adapting and innovating to face the new challenges of the 21st Century. Our shared values, our commitment to democracy and the rule of law, and the natural friendship between our peoples form the foundation of a proud and deep relationship between our two great nations. Our service men and women have fought side-by-side in every major conflict since the First World War and continue that storied tradition today in Afghanistan. And while the bonds of the U.S.-Australia alliance were forged in the defining battles of the past century, that is but one dimension of a multi-faceted relationship. Today, our diplomats work together to address emerging transnational challenges, to advance and support human rights, democracy, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms around the world, and to shape the evolving architecture of the Asia-Pacific that will provide a context for the region's continued dramatic growth and rise. Our aid workers help empower those on the margins of society from the Mekong to the Horn of Africa.

We come to San Francisco to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-Australia alliance. It is fitting that we return to the Presidio, where our countries signed the ANZUS Treaty six decades ago. We meet to reflect on the rich history of our relationship, to honor the leaders whose foresight and vision forged this alliance, and to chart a course for the future of our enduring partnership that underscores and situates the U.S.-Australia alliance as an anchor of the Asia-Pacific. We reaffirm our shared security obligations, underscore our common approach to regional developments and global security, and stress our resolve to increase future cooperation to address common strategic objectives.

I. Shared Security Obligations

We reaffirm that the ANZUS Treaty serves as the political and legal foundation of the U.S.-Australia security alliance and that the alliance remains indispensable to the security of Australia and the United States and to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Today, we affirm that our commitment to peace, security and prosperity also acknowledges the importance of promoting a secure, resilient and trusted cyberspace that ensures safe and reliable access for all nations.

II. Regional trends in the Asia-Pacific Region

We underscore the growing importance of the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S.-Australia alliance is key to peace and security in the region, further fostering Asia's tremendous economic growth. We recognize the need to work together to shape the evolving strategic landscape that connects the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. We value the dialogue on East Asia undertaken by our two governments, and express a joint commitment to continue this and other strategic dialogues. In this context, we have decided on the following shared objectives to guide our countries' ongoing cooperative and individual work in the Asia-Pacific:

Japan

Support the U.S.-Japan alliance, which is critical to peace and security in East Asia, and the developing Australia-Japan defense and security relationship, and take steps to further increase interoperability and training opportunities among the three countries.

Enhance trilateral policy coordination among Australia, Japan, and the United States on a range of regional and global security issues through the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue and the trilateral Security and Defense Cooperation Forum.

Strengthen coordination with Japan on regional and global development and assistance efforts.

Republic of Korea:

Continue to work closely with the Republic of Korea (ROK) on defense and security issues, including international peacekeeping operations, anti-piracy, counter-proliferation, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Work closely with the ROK to ensure stability on the Korean Peninsula and deter further provocations by North Korea.

North Korea:

Continue to urge North Korea to improve inter-Korean relations and regional stability by demonstrating through concrete actions that it is committed to enter into serious negotiations through the Six-Party process.

Deter provocations by North Korea through enhanced training and integration with the Republic of Korea and Japan.

Work to implement the goals of a complete, and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea, including its uranium enrichment program, through irreversible steps, and through the Six Party process; resolution of issues related to proliferation, ballistic missiles, illicit activities, and humanitarian concerns, including the matter of abductions by North Korea; and full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions and the September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

China:

Welcome the emergence of a stable, peaceful and prosperous China that plays a constructive role in Asian and global affairs.

Seek to build a positive, cooperative and comprehensive relationship with China aimed at expanding cooperation on regional and global challenges, while constructively managing differences.

Pursue fair, balanced and mutually beneficial economic relations with China, recognizing that such engagement also contributes to the maintenance of stable and constructive relations more broadly.

Encourage stable, healthy, reliable and continuous military-to-military relations with China, featuring open, transparent and substantive discussions of capabilities and intentions.

Enhance trust and confidence through greater dialogue on strategic security issues.

India

Welcome India's engagement with East Asia as part of its 'Look East' policy.

Deepen strategic ties with India.

Identify areas of potential cooperation between the United States, Australia and India, including maritime security, disaster risk management and regional architecture.

Indonesia

Build on our enhanced coordination and our respective strategic consultations with Indonesia on a range of political, economic, and security issues, as well as on climate change and education.

Work through our respective partnerships with Indonesia to strengthen defense and security cooperation and in particular, enhance coordination on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, international peacekeeping, anti-piracy efforts, maritime security, and counterterrorist activities.

Support Indonesia's important role as 2011 ASEAN Chair and assist in preparations for a productive East Asia Summit (EAS) in November.

Burma:

Promote human rights and genuine steps toward democracy in Burma in the interest of lasting peace and stability in the country.

Welcome reform promises by President Thein Sein and urge the Government of Burma to translate these promises into action.

Urge the Government of Burma to make concrete progress on core concerns including the release of all political prisoners, cessation of violence against ethnic minorities, and the establishment of a process of dialogue with ethnic groups and opposition leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, in order to begin a genuine process of national reconciliation.

To this end, acknowledge the August 19 meeting between President Thein Sein and Aung San Suu Kyi as a first step in the right direction.

Underscore the importance of Burma's fully complying with all its international obligations, including UN Security Council Resolutions on nonproliferation and highlight the need for greater transparency in Burma's engagement with North Korea.
Pacific Islands

Affirm our enduring commitment to work together to play a constructive role in the Pacific.

Continue and expand joint efforts to strengthen democracy, support economic reform, enhance good governance, encourage environmental sustainability and address the impacts of climate change, in partnership with the governments and people of Pacific Island countries.

Support the protection of the region's fisheries, enhance maritime monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement capacity, and build on existing initiatives to strengthen management of fisheries resources and to deliver equitable and sustainable outcomes for Pacific Island countries.

Coordinate closely on encouraging Fiji's early return to democracy, including through restoration of the rule of law, strengthening of civil society, and rebuilding democratic institutions.

Work with the Pacific Islands Forum, the Secretariat for the Pacific Community, and other regional bodies to strengthen regional cooperation and deliver results for the people of the Pacific.

South China Sea:

Reiterate that the United States and Australia, along with the international community, have a national interest in freedom of navigation, the maintenance of peace and stability, respect for international law, and unimpeded lawful commerce in the South China Sea.

Reaffirm that we do not take a position on the competing territorial claims in the South China Sea and call on governments to clarify and pursue their territorial claims and accompanying maritime rights in accordance with international law, including the Law of the Sea Convention.

Reaffirm that the United States and Australia support the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and encourage each of the parties to comply with their commitments, including exercising self-restraint and resolving their disputes through peaceful means, and to make progress towards a binding code of conduct.

Reiterate that we oppose the use of coercion or force to advance the claims of any party or interfere with legitimate economic activity.

Regional Architecture

Strengthen regional architecture to maintain and enhance peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific.

Work toward a successful 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum under U.S. leadership, which will accelerate APEC's strong momentum, advancing free trade and economic integration across the region.

Reiterate the importance of the EAS, whose mandate, membership and agenda establish a framework for cooperation on a range of issues.

Welcome Australia's leadership role in building a more robust community in the Asia-Pacific region through the EAS.

Use this year's leaders' meeting in Indonesia to set the direction for the expanded EAS and engage in substantive discussions in Bali on November 19 on regional political, economic, strategic, and other issues.

Build close links between the EAS and other ASEAN-centered ministerial-level forums such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Welcome the establishment of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) as an important element of regional architecture and contributor to regional security and stability.

Work towards a successful conclusion of the current Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations in order to expand trade, investment and growth among the nine TPP parties, including the United States and Australia, and drive further regional economic integration.

III. JOINTLY CONFRONTING GLOBAL SECURITY ISSUES

We share a common approach to global issues, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, the Middle East, and Libya.

Afghanistan and Pakistan:

We recognize the achievements and honor the sacrifices of our armed forces in Afghanistan, welcome the successes of the military campaign, and have decided to:

Continue close cooperation on our common goal of a stable, prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan embedded in a stable, prosperous and peaceful region.

Support the transition to Afghan-led security responsibility while committing to long-term engagement to support Afghanistan's stability and economic development.

Support and engage Pakistan in its efforts to combat terrorism, strengthen democracy and promote economic development.

Promote security, trade and investment in the region, stressing the importance of the upcoming Istanbul and Bonn conferences and the vision for a "New Silk Road."

Middle East / North Africa:

We reaffirm the importance of continued assistance and support to encourage the democratic transitions taking place across the Middle East. We have decided to:

Reaffirm that we are in full agreement about the urgent need to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and strongly support the vision of Israeli-Palestinian peace outlined by President Barack Obama in May 2011. We strongly appeal to the parties to overcome the current obstacles and resume direct bilateral negotiations without delay or preconditions.

Ensure full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on Iran, while jointly addressing Iran's deteriorating human rights situation.

Reiterate our call for Syrian President Assad to step aside and allow for a democratic transition to take place in Syria.

Work with the Libyan Transitional National Council and international community to support the Libyan people as they confront the challenges of a post-Qadhafi Libya, and encourage an inclusive transition that leads to a democratic Libya.

Development

We stress that international development assistance is critical to our diplomatic and national security interests, as it fosters stability, security and prosperity in developing regions and countries. Recognizing this, we have decided to:

Continue to strengthen the partnership between AusAID and USAID, which was formalized last year through a Memorandum of Understanding on international development cooperation.

Delegate cooperation agreements between USAID and AusAID in Tanzania, on maternal and child health and family planning, and in Indonesia, on water connections.

Continue cooperating closely in Afghanistan by supporting law and justice programs and dispute resolution mechanisms at the community level in Uruzgan Province, and by assisting the Government to deliver essential services through the Civilian Technical Assistance Program.

Plan to deploy Australian Civilian Corps personnel alongside U.S. Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization personnel to support conflict resolution and stabilization in South Sudan.

Develop opportunities for collaboration in East Asia, particularly in the lower Mekong region, to advance food security, mitigate HIV and other pandemic diseases, and address the impact of global climate change.

We reaffirm our shared commitment to addressing global development challenges including gender inequality and violence against women. Empowering and protecting women and girls requires strong, coordinated action by the international community. As an example of our shared commitment, Australia and the United States are co-hosting a policy dialogue this year on effective means to combat gender-based violence and promote the empowerment of women across the Pacific region.

IV. STRENGTHENING ALLIANCE COOPERATION

The U.S.-Australia alliance is a strategic anchor for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. On the 60th anniversary of the signing of the ANZUS Treaty, we approve of measures designed to further strengthen alliance cooperation, interoperability, and capabilities. We affirm the ANZUS Treaty and our shared commitment to advance peace, security, and prosperity. We are concerned by evolving threats in the sea, space, and cyberspace, and nontraditional security challenges, and have decided to:

Increase coordination and consultation on the evolving strategic environment in the Asia-Pacific, to ensure that the alliance adapts to address challenges as they arise.

Space

We endeavor to expand our close cooperation on space situational awareness and the development of transparency and confidence-building measures.

We support the efforts to develop a U.S.-Australia Combined Communications Partnership, building on the Military Satellite Communications Partnership Statement of Principles signed at AUSMIN in 2008.

Cyber

As a further reflection of our alliance's continuing ability to adapt in the face of changing circumstances, we have decided to:

Address the growing cyber threats facing our two nations and the wider international community.

Endorse a joint statement, reflecting and enhancing the close collaboration between our two nations on cyber issues.
Force Posture

Last year, we established a bilateral working group to develop options to align our respective force postures in ways that would benefit the national security of both countries and which will help us to shape the emerging regional security environment. Together, we have refined and assessed a range of potential cooperative initiatives, including:

options for increased U.S. access to Australian training, exercise and test ranges;

the prepositioning of U.S. equipment in Australia;

options for greater use by the United States of Australian facilities and ports; and

options for joint and combined activities in the region.

Our discussions have acknowledged that our respective military forces must be postured to respond in a timely and effective way to the range of contingencies that may arise in our region, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and to enhance our ability to work with the armed forces of regional partners.

We are satisfied with the progress that has been made and have directed that the options be further developed for consideration by our respective Governments.

Interoperability

We underscore that interoperability has long been a hallmark of the alliance and will only grow stronger through closer alliance cooperation. The implementation of the Defense Trade Cooperation Treaty will support this cooperation. We have decided to:

Enhance the interoperability of our forces, especially as this relates to our common commitment to cooperation on combat and transport aircraft, helicopters, submarine combat systems and torpedo technology.

Build on the expanded civilian component of the successful TALISMAN SABER exercise, our largest and most important combined military exercise, to strengthen interoperability and our combined capacity to deal with post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction.

Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)

Australia noted and will continue to consult with the United States as it develops the phased adaptive approach to BMD outlined in the U.S. BMD Review, which will allow missile defense to be adapted to the threats unique to the Asia-Pacific.

We are continuing our cooperation to build a more detailed understanding of regional ballistic missile threats; cooperative research on systems to counter such threats; and options for practical cooperation in this area.

V. AUSMIN 2012

Australia looks forward to hosting the 2012 AUSMIN consultations.

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