

Remarks at meeting with His Excellency Mr Rivlin, President of the State of Israel

HIS EXCELLENCY MR RIVLIN, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

You are most welcome. We are already, in the name of all the people of Israel, I can say to you that they are so pleased that you are here and we are welcoming you from the bottom of our hearts.

PRIME MINISTER:

Mr President, thank you and your welcome has been so warm. We thank you for it.

We share so much history but above all we share the same values.

And the values of freedom and democracy were those for which the Australian Light Horse fought and won 100 years ago.

PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

Absolutely.

PRIME MINISTER:

And that enabled, as we discussed in Beersheba yesterday, that enabled the creation of the State of Israel.

It was a step along the road and we are proud to have played a part in ensuring the extraordinary achievement, the fulfilment of history here in Israel.

It is wonderful to be here.

PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

The step towards Beersheba was the first step towards Jerusalem, to free Jerusalem and to unite Jerusalem – that's what our friends have done 100 years ago and we are so pleased to have you here with us after 100 years.

We are looking forward for the next 100 years.

PRIME MINISTER:

And many more centuries.

PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

Doorstop – Jerusalem, Israel

PRIME MINISTER:

We have had a very warm meeting, a very good constructive discussion. Bibi and I get on very well. And Bibi and Sara and Lucy and I get on very well too.

It's a very good relationship both at a governmental level, at a personal level, shared values.

And so much more to do together – we've that with the defence industry MOU and obviously the work that Dan Tehan is undertaking here on cyber security which is going to be an even bigger agenda in the years ahead.

And of course, tomorrow, we will see the re-enactment of the charge of the Australian Light Horse at Beersheba.

An extraordinary moment in history and it will be just so wonderful.

We'll all be so proud to be there.

Some questions?

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister you have spoken about the synergies, about the shared values but there is one issue which you don't see eye to eye and that is Iran and the push by the Israelis to end the nuclear deal. Did you hear anything from Mr Netanyahu that changed your view or did you manage to influence him?

PRIME MINISTER:

Look, we had actually had a very lengthy discussion about that.

We do have a, we have a different perspective on the agreement. We believe that – as do the other signatories to the agreement – we are not a signatory to the agreement of course but I'm talking about the P5+1 – the permanent five members of the UN Security Council plus Germany – there is a commitment to stick with it.

We absolutely understand Israel's very real concerns and anxiety about Iran moving to a nuclear weapons capability.

But we are not persuaded that moving away from the agreement – the JCPOA – would be beneficial in terms of, you know, preventing that type of

proliferation.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, did you discuss the issue of the extradition of Malka Leifer? And if so, what was Mr Netanyahu's response?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, we did discuss it. I raised it with him and we discussed it in some detail and he has certainly taken all of that on board. But I can't go into any more detail than that because really it is a matter for the Israeli authorities but I have absolutely raised it in quite a bit of depth.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, I guess you didn't catch the morning newspaper here in Jerusalem? The headline is "*Political crisis forces Turnbull to Shorten visit*". The Opposition Leader is of course just up the road here talking about the turmoil and chaos in Australian politics. Would you use those words to describe the situation at home with Julie Bishop as Acting Prime Minister?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, of course not. The business of government goes on and within a couple of hours of the Court's decision the ministries of Barnaby Joyce and Fiona Nash were reallocated. Obviously, Matt Canavan came back as Resources and Northern Australia Minister. I took on Agriculture and Water and Fiona's portfolios have been shared between Darren Chester and Mitch Fifield.

A writ was issued for the by-election. It is underway.

We have achieved so much over the last 18 months or so since the election and so much in the last two months, in fact, that you can see that government goes on. I know newspapers, I don't want to criticise the media, but I know that stories of turmoil are more likely to attract a click than good government but the reality is government goes on. It is business as usual.

JOURNALIST:

Do you ever feel you've had enough? You'd just like to – it's all been too much? You've just had enough of the whole political scene?

PRIME MINISTER:

[Laughs]

I have never had more fun in my life.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

Joint Press Statement with His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of the State of Israel

HIS EXCELLENCY BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, PRIME MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

Prime Minister Turnbull, Malcolm, I want to say how pleased we are on your visit, historic visit – on the historic occasion of this tremendous centennial that we'll celebrate tomorrow at Beersheba.

It highlights, as does our meeting that we've just ended, the extraordinary friendship between Israel and Australia.

We just signed a defence industry agreement. It reflects our commitment to defend our common values of freedom, of democracy, the rule of law, pluralism.

These are values that are under attack by various forces.

We cooperate in every way, to safeguard our peoples and safeguard our civilization.

We are pursuing and have discussed the possibilities of cooperating in areas of technology that are changing our world. Creating vast new opportunities.

Australia is one of the most developed countries in the world. Israel is one of the most developed countries in the world. Together we can do a lot more.

There's a natural sympathy between our peoples.

I said before that I felt it everywhere in Australia. I remember the embrace of ordinary Australians when my wife and I were sitting on a beach and they started coming to us. They wanted to talk to us.

I remember these Jewish children singing songs in Hebrew, from a Jewish school in Sydney.

The heart warms when it sees these expressions of friendship and solidarity.

I have to say that we have admired the fact that Australia has taken part virtually I think, in all the battles for freedom in the last 100 years.

I told you that the first meeting between our peoples actually took place before Beersheba in Gallipoli, when the first Jewish fighting forces fought alongside their Australian counterparts in Gallipoli.

That didn't go so well, Beersheba went better.

The impression that Australian soldiers left on the Jewish community here in the land of Israel at the time, was lasting.

Tremendous sympathy, the informality, the warmth, the shared values that you so well described a few hours earlier. When you spoke about this, this is all true, this is something that creates a sympathy an identification and a friendship that is real.

I know that people think that all international relations are guided by interest. Of course they are.

But where interest coheres with values, there is something special. Interest coheres with values in the relations between Israel and Australia.

And the fact that you came here, halfway around the world – you can't really get further away than the distance between Israel and Australia – the fact that you came here I think signifies that friendship.

I'm very proud to have been the first Israeli Prime Minister to visit Australia.

I'm delighted that you are here, the second time a Prime Minister visits Israel.

I think the future portends great things for both our countries which are really one in values.

So welcome friend.

PRIME MINISTER:

Bibi, Prime Minister thank you very much for that warm welcome.

We have had a very productive set of discussions together, just the two of us, with Sara and Lucy and of course a full bilateral meeting.

And we've covered a very, very wide range of issues.

We've talked about history.

We've talked about the Battle of Beersheba. And we will have more to say about that tomorrow.

But you know, it was the last successful cavalry charge. And it was, there were more horses and troopers in that charge than there were in the charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War. And it ended much better too. It had been a victory. And it was as I was saying earlier today, it really had a turning point, a pivotal moment.

But we've seen over the century deeper and deeper cooperation and collaboration between Australia and Israel. And I think today it is at its height but it has a long way to go.

We have those shared values of which Bibi and I have both spoken – freedom,

the rule of law, democracy. Easy to trip off the tongue but they're scarcer than they should be and they require always determination, blood and treasure to defend and preserve. And our two nations have done that again and again.

We face common threats and we talked about those at length. The threat of Islamist terrorism in this region where our armed forces are of course in the anti-ISIL coalition.

And also of course in our region where we've seen ISIL insurrection, ISIL-backed insurrections in the Philippines. And again we've been supporting the Government of the Philippines in defending their democracy and their way of life against those terrorists so much closer to us.

But the reality is that nowhere is very far away from anywhere. It does take the best part of a day to get here, Bibi, on an aeroplane but the truth is in a day of the internet, everywhere is just a fraction of a second away from everywhere else.

The truth is that technology has empowered individuals in a way that was scarcely imaginable not so many years ago but it is also empowered individuals and individual actors who seek to do us harm.

And so the cyber security agenda is more important than ever.

And that is why Dan Tehan – who is the Minister Assisting me on Cyber Security is here in Israel and will be with us tomorrow as also the Minister for Veterans' Affairs – he is here leading a delegation for a cyber security dialogue here in Israel, happening right at the moment. And we are going to take that further to have a closer collaboration on cyber security and we'll be having another dialogue with government industry and academia in Canberra next year.

We have a vital interest in working more closely together all of the time. More closely and intensely together to keep our people safe from terrorism and from the use of the internet, encrypted applications especially, which are so enabling terrorism in a way that would have seemed impossible as I said a few years ago.

Technology empowers the individual actor in every dimension but also it empowers individual actors who seek to do us harm.

I want to acknowledge the importance of the memorandum we have just signed.

We have a vitally important national enterprise to create a sovereign defence industry in Australia on a scale that matches our defence spending.

We have the largest investment in defence capabilities underway in Australia at the moment ever in peace time. A massive investment, particularly in our Naval forces. 54 Naval vessels will be built as a result of decisions taken by my government.

This is a huge commitment.

It is a commitment to advances manufacturing.

It is a commitment to our sovereign defence industries in Australia and we seek to partner with friends and allies all around the world and we look forward to deeper collaboration with Israel in defence industry and in particular in the cyber domain.

We are very dear friends. As you know, we feel at home.

Bibi talked about the warm welcome he had in Australia. And he did, much of it was in my electorate, in my district of Wentworth.

And you will feel very much at home tomorrow because a large percentage of my electorate will be with us. In fact, I'm told that the traffic has never been less congested as a result of the commemorations here in Israel.

There is a warmth, there is a commitment, there is a passion for the values that we share in common.

And we have a shared history, we have shared values and you know, we now have a shared agenda to ensure that together we develop the industries, the technologies of the future. We collaborate on them.

There are 16 Israeli companies – did you know – listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. Worth a couple of billion dollars. They're not huge companies by the standards of the tech giants but you can see, that would've seemed an improbable thing to say – why would an Israeli company list on the Australian Stock Exchange? That shows you how much closer our two countries have become.

In the age of the internet everywhere is close to everywhere else. All it needs is for us to have the imagination to match the technology. There is plenty of technology. It's the technological imagination that makes the difference and that needs leadership at our level, at a governmental level, at a private sector level.

Leadership and imagination is the key to harnessing that technology and making our partnership between Australia and Israel even greater in the future than it has been in the last century.

Thank you very much. It has been a very warm welcome.

PRIME MINISTER OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

100th anniversary of Battle of Beersheba

Australia will today commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba.

It is an opportunity to pause and reflect on the nature of military service and the sacrifices made on our behalf in defence of our nation and values.

In one of the great cavalry charges, the Australian Light Horse attacked the enemy lines defending the town of Beersheba, in what is now Israel.

About 800 Australians from the 4th and 12th Light Horse Regiments were involved in the charge, suffering 31 deaths and 36 wounded. They captured more than 700 Turkish soldiers.

Australia's official war historian Charles Bean described the battle: "It had been a glorious hour, filled not only with military achievement of a very rare kind, but with memorable deeds by individual officers and men, which serve vividly to demonstrate the spirit which alone made success possible."

The capture of Beersheba led to an opening in the Turkish flank that enabled Allied forces to break the Ottoman line near Gaza on 7 November and advance further into Palestine.

More than 1,350 Australians lost their lives in the Middle East campaigns of the First World War and today we honour their bravery and sacrifice.

As Australia marks the Century of Service, we honour the memories of more than 102,000 Australians who have died in defence of our nation and we pay our respects to everyone who has served in our military.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and New Zealand Governor-General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Dame Patsy Reddy, will join the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, at a joint Australian–New Zealand commemorative service held in Be'er-Sheva, in Israel today.

A number of other events are planned by the municipality of Be'er-Sheva and other organisations to coincide with the centenary. These include a civic parade, a re-enactment of the charge of the Light Horse and a Turkish memorial service.

The commemorative service will be broadcast live on the ABC from 6:00pm AEDT. Further information can be found on the [Department of Veterans' Affairs website](#).

Visit to Australia by the Prime Minister of New Zealand

I look forward to welcoming the Prime Minister of New Zealand, The Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern MP, to Australia this Sunday.

Australia and New Zealand are not just mates, we are family.

Our relationship is built on a solid foundation of economic, security, community and historical ties.

Around 650,000 New Zealand citizens currently reside in Australia. Earlier this year, I was pleased to establish a new pathway to permanent residency for those citizens who continue to contribute to the success of our nation.

Our economic integration over the past 30 years is a remarkable success story. In 2016, our two-way trade reached \$24.8 billion and two-way investment totalled \$153 billion. Prime Minister Ardern and I will discuss how we can further our trade and economic opportunities and promote jobs and skills development in both countries.

Our discussions will also cover our security and defence partnership, which dates back over a century. Australian and New Zealander soldiers have fought, and died, together, as ANZACs, on far flung battlefields across the globe.

Our discussions will cover a wide range of topics including the forthcoming APEC Leaders' Meeting in Vietnam, the East Asia Summit in the Philippines and how we can work most effectively together with our South Pacific neighbours.

I look forward to congratulating Prime Minister Ardern on her recent election and discussing how we can further strengthen the already close friendship between our nations.~~I look forward to welcoming the Prime Minister of New Zealand, The Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern MP, to Australia this Sunday.

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