

Remarks at bilateral meeting with Her Excellency Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia

PRIME MINISTER:

Madame President, welcome to Australia. You're the first Croatian President to visit Australia since 1995.

We've already had a very good discussion this morning, we've got a lot more to talk about but of course you come as President of Croatia to a nation that has a very large Croatian community, I know, that has received you rapturously. We can understand why.

You've had a very enthusiastic reception here and a very warm welcome.

You've been a great supporter of Australia as we have of Croatia in terms of our multilateral nominations for the Human Rights Council and I thank you for your support on the European Free Trade Agreement.

We look forward to further discussions about how we can advance our shared values in the world and of course promote further investment between Croatia and Australia.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA:

Thank you very much Mr Prime Minister. It's a true pleasure to be here, and I'd like to thank you on behalf of my delegation and myself for the very warm reception this morning.

And I'd like to thank the Australian people and especially the Croatian community for the warm welcome that we have received throughout the few days that we have been here already.

Yes the Croatian community is a huge reason, a great reason for the visit to Australia as well and we're very proud of them because they are proud Australians, but also they cherish and nourish their Croatian heritage and they keep close connections with Croatia.

I'm very pleased that this morning we could already discuss our bilateral relationship and our desire to have closer cooperation and closer discussions.

Croatia will continue to support Australia in the European Union and argue for closer links between the European Union and Australia. So those in the European Union and in NATO you have a strong friend and ally.

We are very much interested in expanding our bilateral relationship in many areas from science and technology to most notably economic exchanges, trade

and investment.

I hope that with today's discussions we will also take a new step forward towards potential new investment of Australia in Croatia, and Croatia in Australia in of course trade exchange.

I am pleased that there are four chambers of commerce, Croatian-Australian Chambers of Commerce here and on Sunday we signed a Memorandum of Understanding between our Chamber of the Economy and the four chambers and I believe that that also will contribute to our bilateral relationship.

So thank you very much once again for the warm reception and I'm very much looking forward to working closely with you, Mr Prime Minister, Madame Minister and with all of you and I am very much looking forward to our growing friendship between Croatia and Australia.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

Remarks at Home Affairs portfolio briefing

PRIME MINISTER:

Welcome. I'm joined this morning by the Attorney-General, the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, the Minister for Justice, Michael Keenan, who is the Minister assisting me for Counter-Terrorism and the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Darren Chester.

Also, the heads of our agencies that we are bringing together into the new Department of Home Affairs. It's long overdue, this reform, but it will mean that these agencies – critically important to keeping Australians safe – are working together in the same department.

The agencies whose leaders are with us today were responsible for disrupting and containing the most serious, elaborate terrorist plot within Australia that we've confronted. This was a plot to bring down an aeroplane. Hundreds of people would have died had it been carried out.

It's a great credit, particularly to the work of ASIO, whose Director-General is here, and the Federal Police, whose Commissioner is here, for the way in which they worked with the State Police to identify this conspiracy, to disrupt it, contain it, to ensure that Australians were kept safe and of course now, to prosecute two individuals on terrorist offences. Since

September 2014, our agencies have disrupted 13 terrorist plots and charged 73 Australians with terrorism offences here in Australia.

Now, none of this can be taken for granted. We all know that there is no place for 'set and forget'. We congratulate and thank the officers of the agencies, Border Force, police, ASIO, Office of Transport Security. We thank them for their diligence and their commitment and for their success on this occasion. But we all know the challenge is relentless and so we can't be complacent.

So what we're doing with the Department of Home Affairs is ensuring that our agencies can do an even better job. To support that, we're having a discussion here today about how the implementation of this reform is underway.

I want to note that we have maintained additional security measures at airports following this recent disruption of this plot. Some of the measures are obvious to the travelling public and others are not but all of these aspects of security are under constant review.

The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester, will be reviewing – is reviewing currently -our aviation security arrangements. That includes the viability of checking identities at airports.

I've also asked the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton, to undertake further work on cargo, passenger security and screening at airports.

So constantly, in every way, every day, we are focused on improving, enhancing the ability of our agencies to keep Australians safe.

As I said, there is no place for 'set and forget'. We are relentless. We recognise the challenge that we face is relentless as well. So we must be resolute in our efforts to ensure we are always doing everything we can to keep Australians safe.

I look forward to having a good discussion here about the implementation of this important reform.

Thank you.

[ENDS]

[Remarks at 2017 Parliamentary Friends](#)

of the AFL Reception

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much and thank you Gill, Steve Irons and Richard Marles, the Co-chairs of the Parliamentary Friends of the AFL, Bill Shorten, the Leader of the Opposition and so many of my parliamentary colleagues, it's great to be with you.

And it's great that we can unite tonight to celebrate what is, I'm sure we can all agree, one of the greatest games – the most remarkable athletic game played in Australia.

The most athletic, spectacular code of football – competes obviously with the world game soccer and with the rugby codes but even an old 3rd grade front row prop like me has to look back in wonder at the athleticism of the game when as they say the big men fly.

Speaking of big men I want to welcome Neale Daniher, a legend of the AFL – I was just saying hello to Neale a moment ago – as a player and a coach for the Bombers and Demons. An extraordinary Australian.

Neale, the awareness you have raised about motor neurone disease, your passion and resilience is inspiring and your advocacy on the need for research and funding into this tragic illness has been remarkable.

In such a short time you've achieved so much, and that's something for which you and your family can be extraordinarily proud.

I'm pleased to add that the government has supported the Big Freeze at the 'G, your remarkable cause, with nearly \$3 million last year and a further \$2 million this year under the Medical Research Future Fund.

As a New South Welshman, it's great to be when both teams from New South Wales are having such a big impact on the AFL.

And it is remarkable, it says a lot about the way in which the AFL is a truly national game that out of the eight right at this point in time, five are from outside Victoria – two New South Wales teams, two South Australian teams and of course the West Coast Eagles. Steve is very pleased with that!

But it is truly become a national game, it is the national game.

And as a Sydney-sider, we've had to endure years of the Melbourne Storm having such an impact on the NRL, it's about time two Sydney clubs are having such a big impact on your game – the Victorian game which is now well and truly, as I said, Australia's national game.

Look out for the Swans come September – I'm sure, I know, they'll be hard to beat.

But you know, the Giants have had a spectacular season and Lucy, as you know, is the Chief Commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission works in Parramatta and I think I'm going to lose her to the Giants at any moment. I can feel her loyalties to the Swans moving to the Giants, but anyway, we'll have them both covered.

But, look, let me finish on this point and it is really to praise the AFL for what it does right across the board for diversity, for inclusion, it is a powerful binding force in this the most remarkable, the most successful multi-cultural society in the world.

We've also had the inaugural and highly successful first season of the AFL Women's competition – we just saw a great video about that – and I think we all know that is a national competition that will just go from strength to strength.

It has already done so much to inspire a generation of younger Australians, a new generation of girls, of aspiring women's footballers to not only take up this great game, but to represent their club at the highest level.

Congratulations to the AFL. This is an exciting journey for all of us. You can see how popular you are Gillon with so many people here tonight, everybody loves Australian Football.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

[Remarks at bilateral meeting with The Honourable Manasseh Sogavare, Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands](#)

PRIME MINISTER:

Prime Minister we are delighted to welcome you and Madame Sogavare to Australia, and of course your ministers and senior officials. Thank you so much, we enjoyed dinner at The Lodge last night.

Our strong partnership was forged 75 years ago in the Battle for Guadalcanal and we have built our partnership over the years since and in particular with the RAMSI operation.

So successful – concluded very recently as you know, and commemorated that conclusion with our Governor-General representing Australia in the Solomons.

You said to me last night that the foundation of that success was the

community and partnership, and that is a tribute both to the commitment of Australian Defence, police personnel and those of other Pacific countries by the course of goodwill and the determination of the people of the Solomon Islands, and I thank you for that.

We look forward to the signing of the Bilateral Security Treaty later today, and continuing to build stronger and stronger ties between our two nations.

Welcome Prime Minister to Australia.

[ENDS]

Remarks ahead of national security briefing with Senator the Hon. Marise Payne, Minister for Defence and Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC, Chief of the Defence Force

PRIME MINISTER:

The Defence Minister and I are here at the Department of Defence to meet with the Chief of the Defence Force, other Defence chiefs, intelligence and foreign policy experts to receive briefings on the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Once again, we call on the North Korean regime to stop its illegal, reckless, provocative conduct which is putting the peace and the stability of the region at risk and indeed, the peace and stability of the whole world at risk.

We join with the global community in enforcing sanctions, economic sanctions, against the North Korean regime to bring it to its senses.

We welcome the decision of the UN Security Council, recently supported by China and Russia, to impose harsher sanctions on North Korea.

As I discussed with Vice President Pence last night, both the United States and Australia are committed to resolving this situation on the Korean Peninsula, to bringing the North Korean regime to its senses through diplomatic and economic means.

We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the United States.

The ANZUS Treaty means that if America is attacked we will come to their aid.

If Australia is attacked, the Americans will come to our aid. We are joined at the hip.

The American Alliance is the bedrock of our national security.

[ENDS]