

# Remarks at the Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience Official Reception

## **PRIME MINISTER:**

Thank you very much Tim and thank you Brendan, both very powerful addresses.

Vice Admiral Griggs, General Campbell, Keith Payne and Flo, Catherine Livingstone and Andy Penn from Telstra and Robert Dick, President of the RSL of Australia, dear friends, all.

As Anzac Day approaches, we remember and honour the sacrifices that have kept us free.

A high price indeed paid for our freedom, paid in young lives lost far from home.

We do not glorify war – Anzac Day is not the anniversary of a great victory.

But it commemorates the triumph of the human spirit, the patriotism, the sacrifice, the courage, the endurance, the mateship.

The same spirit embodied by today's Anzacs who are defending our freedom in the Middle East today.

And I will say today, as I say on many days, we best honour the diggers of a century ago by supporting the servicemen and women, the veterans and their families of today.

We honour all of you and thank you for your service. Those of you that are here and those of you that are around Australia and far from home, keeping us safe.

This is a day we honour the diggers, the servicemen and women of today, as we remember the sacrifices and honour the sacrifices of their grandparents.

Now, a hundred years ago, Australian diggers and French poilus were fighting shoulder to shoulder in the mud of France – and today France and Australia are partners in the war against Daesh, the war against terrorism – and in the light of the attack in Paris today, we offer the family of the victims and the people of France, as we always have, our heartfelt sympathy and resolute solidarity.

*Notre plus sincères condoléances et notre plus forte solidarité*

The Spirit of Anzac Centenary Experience is the flagship of our centenary commemorations of the Great War.

And it reminds us that our Australian values have been fought for from the time we became a nation.

Freedom, parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect, equality, the opportunity to get ahead, the fair go – the opportunity to get ahead but lend a hand to those who fall behind.

Ours is the most successful multicultural society in the world. While other countries are divided by race or religion or indeed defined by them, our diversity is a strength. It is our Australian values open to all that define us. It is our Australian values open to all that unite us.

This remarkable exhibition is a poignant tribute to those values. And at its heart are people, people and their unique stories of loss, of fear, of hope, of courage.

At each stop along its 200,000 kilometre route, communities have contributed memorabilia, making this exhibition an evolving tapestry of human triumph and tragedy.

By the time it closes in just a few days, some 350,000 Australians will have passed through its doors and learned more about why we speak of the legend of Anzac.

Anzacs like Private James Bostock, the second soldier ashore at Gallipoli, whose story and belongings are part of the community zone in Brisbane. It was here that the exhibition welcomed its oldest visitor, 107-year-old Marjorie Bostock who came to pay her respects to her late brother-in-law.

Anzacs like trooper Arthur Blain whose sister Nellie started knitting a pair of socks, only to put them aside when she heard Arthur had died at Gallipoli. And as we reflected just a moment ago, what a poignant tribute to that tragic loss.

Nellie kept those unfinished socks with her until her death at 92. It is one of the most moving objects in this exhibition.

And then there is the bell of Darwin which rang through the night to signal the end of hostilities in 1918, the shell case from the last shot fired at Gallipoli, a medal, a portrait.

Out of context they are objects, but accompanied by stories brilliantly created with a mixture of traditional museumship and the latest digital technology, they are powerful symbols of the human face of war.

They are stories of the lives of our servicemen and women. They are the stories of communities.

My grandfather Fred Turnbull enlisted in 1915 and served on the Western Front. He was a farmer's son, a country boy from the Macleay River, a schoolteacher, he was 22.

A letter to his parents which was reprinted in Kempsey's Macleay Chronicle on

the 21 May 1917 is a reminder of how a whole generation enlisted and so many did not return.

This is what it says: "Sig. F.B. Turnbull, writing from France to his parents, Mr and Mrs J.B. Turnbull of Yarravel, expresses his regret at the death of several Macleay soldiers. Also he writes: I've been rather fortunate lately in meeting people whom I know. A few weeks ago I met Jack Colwell, Bert Dyson and Sam Bond and the other day I met Tom Crielly and an old friend from the Comboyne Jack Allan. Hasty Booth is not far from here, but I have not seen him yet. We expect to have another battle before long. I think the war will not end before next summer, but we can stick to it just as long as old Fritz, and we must bring him down before we can have peace. Please give my regards to all friends."

You can just imagine a whole class, a whole classroom, whole community, young men all of the same age within a few years, all of their friends, there, in France, in the trenches.

This year we commemorate the centenaries of the battles of Bullecourt, Beersheba, Polygon Wood and Passchendaele, each of which carries its own stories.

We mark the 75th anniversaries of the Battle of the Coral Sea, El Alamein and Kokoda and Milne Bay – where more Australians died in seven months of fighting in Papua than in any other campaign of the Second World War.

When I was in PNG two weeks ago I visited Isurava on the Kokoda track and also the Bomana war cemetery to pay my respects to the Australians and Papua New Guineans who made the supreme sacrifice to halt the advance of the Japanese.

That was in Wellington's words a near-run thing. The Australians broke the two pincers of the Japanese advance at Milne Bay and Kokoda.

So much depended on the courage, the endurance, the sacrifice, the mateship of those men and women who fought to stem the tide, but victory was theirs, and we enjoy the freedoms of today because of the sacrifices they made there in New Guinea three quarters of a century ago.

And as I said at the outset and I will say it again, we are always reminded that the best way to honour the diggers of a century ago is to support and care for the servicemen and women and the veterans of today and their families.

Today we acknowledge the final stop for this homage to those who fought in the First World War. It started its journey in Wodonga in September 2015, it finishes here in Sydney after stopping in cities and towns across the country.

More than 80,000 visitors left heartfelt messages in the book of remembrance, conveying their overwhelming pride and gratitude for those who sacrificed their lives for our country.

And it means that the Spirit of ANZAC Centenary Experience has done its job.

Now the Australian War Memorial's quiet presence across Lake Burley Griffin reminds the Parliament and Governments that there is no more solemn decision than to send Australians into battle, and no greater responsibility than to ensure they are well led, well supported, so that they can, God willing, return home safely to their families, mission completed.

I want to thank the Australian War Memorial for organising this centrepiece of the Australian Government's ANZAC Centenary programme.

To Imagination Australia for creating the biggest, most technically advanced exhibition of its kind in Australia.

To the corporate sponsors Telstra and the Commonwealth Bank who not only gave financial support, but enabled staff to volunteer at the exhibition as it rolled into towns around Australia.

To members of the RSL, the Red Cross, Volgistics and community organisations for giving so generously of their time.

And to the members of the Australian Defence Force who covered 45 per cent of the volunteer shifts.

You've brought our most treasured stories out of the museums, out of the history books. You've given them life, and you've brought them into lives of Australians today, a century on.

You've honoured the sacrifice of those Anzacs and you've honoured the values for which they fought.

For all that, and much more, I thank you all.

Lest we forget.

**[ENDS]**

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## **Xi urges Guangxi to play bigger role in Belt and Road**

Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to capitalize on its unique advantages to play a bigger role in the Belt and Road Initiative.

Guangxi should make full use of its geographical location to promote opening up and development, Xi made the remarks during an inspection tour to the south China region between Wednesday and Friday.

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## [China's 'smart cities' to number 500 before end of 2017](#)

More than 500 Chinese cities have started or are expected to start their "smart-city" transformations during 2017, according to the Economic Information Daily.

Currently, a total of 290 cities have initiated smart-city pilot projects, and more than 300 cities have signed smart-city construction agreements with IT companies, including the three major Chinese telecommunications companies, Ant Financial and Tencent.

By the end of March, more than 500 cities, including 95 percent of provincial capitals and 83 percent of prefecture-level cities, had proposed transitioning into smart cities. As construction of smart cities accelerates, the scale of related markets is expected to hit 100 billion RMB. This figure shoots up to 1 trillion when upstream and downstream industries are included.

The Shanghai-Hangzhou-Ningbo Highway has become China's first "internet highway," based on its cooperation with mobile payment service provider Alipay and China Guangfa Bank. With more than 40,000 vehicles streaming across the highway every day, it takes a long time for drivers to pay tolls. Through smart-city applications like mobile payments, the time consumed paying toll fees has been greatly reduced.

Another benefit of smart cities can be found in hospitals. According to Cai Xiujun, president of Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital of the School of Medicine at Zhejiang University, patients will soon be able to take care of preliminary processes using their mobile phones, reducing the average time patients spend waiting in the hospital.

With the construction of smart cities, smart-city applications will be increasingly embraced, said Wu Hequan, an academician with the Chinese Academy of Engineering. Wu believes that more and more enterprises will get involved, which will substantially promote the IT industrial chain.

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## [Guangdong police release nation's first ID authentication app](#)



The identity authentication app. [Photo/Chinanew.com]

Guangdong citizens no longer need to worry about proving their identities, even if they don't happen to have their ID cards on them.

On April 19, Guangzhou police unveiled an identity authentication app that enables citizens to prove their identities via their mobile phones. To date, the city has authorized 20 offices to help citizens register for the service.

Once they register, they can use facial recognition technology, available via the app, to prove their identities whenever and wherever necessary.

Developed by police in the Nansha district of Guangzhou, the app provides highly accurate results while at the same time protecting against personal information leaks.

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## Buying things from the EU

We are still waiting to learn if the rest of the EU wants to impose tariffs on all their many agricultural exports to us, and on the cars they send us. Most of the things we export to them are tariff free under WTO rules or would be subject to very low tariffs. All services are tariff free, the things like aerospace parts and planes are tariff free. The EU sell us so much more of the limited number of items that do attract serious tariffs under WTO schedules.

I would like to reassure people who are worried about this. If by any chance the rest of the EU does turn down our offer of tariff free trade in an unlikely fit of self harm, we can find plenty of cheaper and better substitutes.

You do not have to buy German or French cars. There is now a good choice of models, prices and specifications available from a range of UK car factories. If the EU wants tariffs on cars I would recommend the factory owners increase their UK capacity, as we will be wanting more home produced vehicles.

A visit to one of England's vineyards taught me that England makes some good white wines. There are plenty of good Australian and Californian reds as well as English.

There are many great English cheese, so you don't need to buy French. There is such an abundance of choice. Our dairy industry was held back and made smaller by EU policy, with a long period of restrictive quotas. It needs more domestic demand for higher value added products.

Our supermarkets do rely on a lot of continental fresh produce, but there are other possible sources at home and abroad outside the EU which would be more attractive if they go for the EU tariff option. The UK could remove tariffs on rest of the world food where they produce things we cannot produce here which would bring those prices down.

In a world of oversupply, with low rates of world inflation, being the customer has its advantages. All the time we remain in the EU we have to impose high tariff barriers on food from the rest of the world. Out of the EU we can cut or remove tariffs, and can bargain for a better deal for our exporters at the same time. The EU would be silly to make it dearer and more difficult for us to buy their products, when there is plenty of choice elsewhere.