



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

**ASIA SOCIETY AUSTRALIA
CELEBRATING 20**

When the Asia Society was founded in 1956, the world was a vastly different place.

The focus of political and economic life was the North Atlantic. Yet John D Rockefeller saw things otherwise. He knew that impact and influence would move south and east.

How seminal that insight proved. In 1997, when the Asia Society started in Australia, we were on the cusp of a regional transformation unprecedented in scale and pace in all of human history.

Today, Australia's place in Asia has become the *sine qua non* of our prosperity and national security. The next twenty years promises an even more profound relationship.

Like Rockefeller, Australia has long recognised Asia's strategic and economic centrality. As technological, economic and geopolitical trends in our region merge and accelerate, my Government remains committed to deepening ties and refocussing our efforts.

We are working with bilateral partners and regional institutions to address common challenges. We are advancing economic integration and regional security.

New free trade agreements with Japan, South Korea, and China, and initiatives such as the *New Colombo Plan*, are helping to strengthen broad-based engagement.

With valued partners such as the Asia Society we are enhancing our cultural literacy, supporting more enterprise and investment, and strengthening intergovernmental links.

I congratulate the Asia Society on its vision and twenty years in Australia. Your efforts to deepen engagement in policy, business, education and the arts is crucial, playing a key role in fostering mutual understanding, collaboration and the exchange of ideas.

As we look to the future, this task will be more vital than ever.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mal Turnbull'.

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP
Prime Minister of Australia

17 August 2017