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## **Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to Head Asia Society Policy Institute**

NEW YORK, October 21, 2014 — Asia Society announced today that the Honorable **Kevin Rudd**, former Prime Minister of Australia, will serve as the first President of the **Asia Society Policy Institute**. The Institute, launched this year, is designed to bring Asia to the forefront of global policymaking, advancing innovative thinking on major issues from Asian and American perspectives alike.

The Institute, a new kind of think tank on the rise of Asia, will work to convene, build bridges, and find solutions by bringing the countries of Asia together, and to the center of the global table.

“The rise of Asia is one of the most profound developments of this century,” Asia Society President **Josette Sheeran** said. “Kevin Rudd’s vision for an Asia Pacific community, as evidenced by his public career and many accomplishments as Australia’s Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, make him the ideal choice to lead the Asia Society Policy Institute at this historic moment. His achievements in service to a strengthened Asia Pacific encompass policy and economics, and have been combined with a lifelong study of Chinese culture and fluency in Mandarin, and a deep interest and engagement across the rest of Asia.”

Former U.S. Secretary of State **Henry A. Kissinger**, who serves as Honorary Counselor for the Asia Society Policy Institute, praised the appointment. “Kevin Rudd is a rare global thinker and a sophisticated practitioner of global policy making,” he said. “He has been a key strategist on the future of the Pacific community. His role as President of the Policy Institute can fill an essential gap.”

Mr. Rudd will start as Policy Institute President in January 2015, following the conclusion of his current policy project at The Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center on "alternative futures for U.S.-China relations." He will continue on as a non-resident Fellow with the Belfer Center.

"I am honored to accept this appointment as President of the Asia Society Policy Institute," Mr. Rudd said. "I have long admired the Asia Society and have participated in its work over the past 15 years. The Society is a world-class institution dedicated for nearly 60 years to advancing the understanding of complex Asian realities in the U.S. and across the West, and in doing so contributing to analysis and response to global challenges."

Former U.S. National Security Advisor **Thomas Donilon**, a Distinguished Fellow at the Institute, said, "As Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd played a strategic role in advancing U.S. and global thinking on the rise of China and Asia. His is a vital and constructive voice, and he will play a vital role as President of the Policy Institute."

Added Asia Society Board of Trustees Co-Chairs **Ronnie Chan** and **Henrietta Fore** in a joint statement: "We are delighted that Kevin Rudd, one of the Asia Pacific's most distinguished thinkers and statesmen, will lead the newly launched Asia Society Policy Institute. His successful record of leadership on Asia strategy will be invaluable to Asia Society and to the development of the Policy Institute."

Mr. Rudd served as Australia's 26th Prime Minister from 2007 to 2010 and again in 2013, and as Foreign Minister from 2010 to 2012. As Prime Minister, he led Australia's response during the Global Financial Crisis, viewed by the IMF as the most effective stimulus strategy of all member states. Mr. Rudd is also internationally recognized as one of the founders of the G20.

As Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mr. Rudd was active in global and regional foreign policy leadership. He was a driving force in expanding the East Asia Summit (EAS) to include both the U.S. and Russia in 2010. He also initiated the concept of transforming the EAS into a wider Asia Pacific Community to help manage deep-rooted tensions in Asia, by building the institutions and culture of common security in Asia. On climate change, Mr. Rudd ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2007, and legislated successfully in 2008 for a 20 percent mandatory renewable energy target for Australia. He was a co-author of the report of the U.N. Secretary General's 2012 High Level Panel on Global Sustainability, "Resilient People, Resilient Planet."

**About the Asia Society Policy Institute**

The Asia Society Policy Institute was launched in 2014, aimed at providing a unique platform for policy development. The Institute brings an Asia-wide scope, the participation of policy, business and civil society leaders, and the application of Asia Society's six-decade record of work to advance prosperity, security and sustainability across Asia. The Institute's Honorary Council and advisors include political and business leaders from seven nations, five former U.S. Secretaries of State, civil society leaders, and scholars from Asia and the U.S.

**About the Asia Society**

Asia Society is the leading educational organization dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context. Across the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, the Society provides insight, generates ideas, and promotes collaboration to address present challenges and create a shared future.

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, non-profit institution with headquarters in New York, major centers in Hong Kong and Houston, and offices in Los Angeles, Manila, Mumbai, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, Sydney and Washington, D.C.

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