

2.12.2022

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTERS OF AUSTRALIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

The Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, welcomed Prime Minister Sanna Marin of the Republic of Finland to Sydney on 2 December 2022, marking the first visit to Australia by a Finnish Prime Minister. The Prime Ministers discussed a range of issues reflecting the breadth of their common interests and values.

Leaders reaffirmed the warm and productive relationship between Australia and Finland, underpinned by a common vision based on equality, trust and shared values. They underlined the need to work together in strengthening their resilience as open and democratic societies and in fostering sustainable development. They agreed that managing complex supply chains, energy sources and investing in trustworthy critical and emerging technologies was needed to promote economic, political, social and environmental stability as well as human rights.

Discussions reinforced Australia's close partnership with the European Union, as highlighted by the entry into force of the Australia-EU Framework Agreement in October 2022. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the swift conclusion of a comprehensive and ambitious EU-Australia Trade Agreement. Once concluded, a trade agreement between the European Union and Australia would herald a new era in EU-Australia relations and offer significant economic benefits to both sides. The Prime Ministers agreed that defending an open, free, fair and resilient multilateral rules-based trading system is a priority for both countries.

Russia's brutal and illegal invasion of Ukraine has undermined European and global security. The Prime Ministers condemned Russia's war of aggression, a clear violation of international law and the United Nations Charter. They firmly rejected and unequivocally condemned the attempted illegal annexation by Russia of Ukrainian territories. They reiterated their unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Prime Ministers demanded that Russia immediately end its war and withdraw its forces from within Ukraine's borders. They expressed their commitment to work together with the international community to continue supporting Ukraine. The brutal violence towards innocent civilians is reprehensible, and those responsible for the atrocities in Ukraine needed to be held accountable. Prime Minister Albanese acknowledged Finland's accession to NATO and looks forward to working with Finland in Australia's capacity as an Enhanced Opportunities Partner to NATO.

The Prime Ministers pledged to work together to defend and strengthen democracy; promote and protect human rights, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, media freedom, gender equality, diversity and social inclusion; promote inclusive and interoperable digitalisation; and counter misinformation and disinformation. The Prime Ministers reiterated their strong commitment to being leaders in gender equality and making it central to their governments' policy and decision-making.

The leaders acknowledged the critical importance of the multilateral system, with the UN as its cornerstone that underpins the rules-based order, for ensuring global security, stability and prosperity. Australia and Finland are committed to multilateral cooperation to find solutions to the most pressing global challenges. The Prime Ministers highly value the important work of the United Nations Human Rights Council and the broader United Nations human rights system for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world. This includes responding to and ending all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, in all contexts.

Fighting climate change and protecting biodiversity, and realising the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals require global cooperation. We need to make rapid, deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and act urgently to adapt to climate change in order to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. We affirm our resolve to work with the international community to pursue efforts to keep 1.5 degrees within reach. The Prime Ministers welcomed the historic progress made at the recently concluded 27th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP27) in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt to develop funding arrangements to support the world's most climate vulnerable countries to address losses and damages associated with the adverse impacts of climate change. The magnitude and seriousness of climate impacts to people and nature depend on the actions we take now.

Protecting biodiversity can also help us mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Convention on Biological Diversity's COP15 comes at a crucial time: the Prime Ministers committed to work towards securing an ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework recognising the urgent need to address the global biodiversity crisis by halting and reversing biodiversity loss to achieve a nature positive world. Australia and Finland are also committed to reaching without delay an ambitious and effective agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Australia and Finland are like-minded partners in tackling global challenges, including in the Indo-Pacific region. Leaders reaffirmed their adherence to the fundamental principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including the right to exercise freedom of navigation and overflight. Australia welcomes increased European engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including through implementation of the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Australia and Finland, as Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, are committed to upholding the rules and norms of the Antarctic Treaty system. They share a firm interest in international cooperation to maintain Antarctica as a place of peace, science and environmental protection, and address challenges including climate change. Australia and Finland will work together for a successful Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Helsinki in 2023.

The Prime Ministers reiterated the importance of science and technology and expressed willingness to strengthen cooperation and information exchange in areas of common interest, especially in

digitalisation, wireless communications technologies, high performance computing including artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum, the data economy, and clean energy transition. Both countries will work to ensure the responsible design, development and use of technology, which has a significant impact on our societies, economy and wellbeing as key drivers for future growth and competitiveness. The Prime Ministers agreed to explore potential for a bilateral cyber and technology policy exchange to develop multi-stakeholder collaboration between public and private sectors.