



## Papua New Guinea-Australia Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership

Papua New Guinea and Australia are sovereign partners who share unique and enduring connections that span decades. Ours is a special relationship underpinned by a shared history, geographic proximity, common strategic interests, deep community links, mutual respect, and cooperation across all spheres.

This **Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership (CSEP)** reinforces the strong bonds between our two countries and strengthens our ambitious vision for the future. Through it, we commit to elevate our relationship, accelerate our strategic and economic cooperation, and build on the close connections between our people, institutions and communities. We enter into this Partnership at a time when the mutual value of our friendship has been clearly demonstrated through our response to natural disasters and a global pandemic, and the impacts these have had on our economies.

The CSEP provides an enduring and overarching framework for deepening bilateral cooperation across security, trade and investment, governance, development cooperation, health, education, gender equality, climate change, people-to-people and institutional links, underpinned by a commitment to achieving concrete outcomes by 2030. Our progress in these areas will be reviewed periodically, with a comprehensive review in 2030. Our partnership will build on strong foundations: the 1987 Joint Declaration of Principles Guiding Relations between Australia and Papua New Guinea (amended 1992), and the 2013 Joint Declaration for a New Papua New Guinea-Australia Partnership. It will be guided by the following principles:

- **Respect** for the laws, regulations and established processes of our individual sovereign States
- **Open communication** to ensure we understand our respective points of view
- **Shared responsibility** to achieve joint strategic, economic, security, and social goals
- **Support** to assist each other in times of need
- **Commitment** to inclusive, sustainable and effective delivery of policies and programs, including as informed by research and development priorities
- **Flexibility** to respond to emerging priorities, including capacity building, as they arise.

Together we commit to advancing shared bilateral, regional and global objectives under the following six pillars:

- Pillar 1 – **Strong Democracies for a Stable Future**
- Pillar 2 – **Close Friends, Enduring Ties**

- Pillar 3 – **Economic Partnership for Prosperity**
- Pillar 4 – **Strategic Cooperation for Security and Stability**
- Pillar 5 – **Social and Human Development**
- Pillar 6 – **Near Neighbours, Global Partners**

We acknowledge our shared interests in a secure, stable, peaceful, prosperous and democratic region; one in which safeguarding the sovereignty of each state is of critical importance. Through this Partnership, the elements outlined under its six pillars, and an Action Plan, we give practical effect to our ambitious vision for the benefit of our people and for future generations.

## **Pillar 1 – Strong Democracies for a Stable Future**

1. Papua New Guinea and Australia share strong traditions of participatory democracy reflecting broader shared values. We recognise and respect our sovereignty, and the fact that our democratic institutions, which are free from coercion and interference, form the foundations of our security and stability.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to the rule of law and support Papua New Guinea in its efforts to address law and order issues through mutually agreed programs and mechanisms. We will strengthen cooperation to support Papua New Guinea's law and justice agencies, while also protecting our independent judicial systems, strengthening our institutions and governance and safeguarding human rights.
3. We commit to supporting the full participation of all people in our societies, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief or any other attribute, consistent with our international human rights obligations. We commit to empowering women and girls, increasing the number of women in visible leadership roles, and ensuring gender equality in all aspects of the economy, politics and government.
4. We will strengthen partnerships to promote gender equality and empower women and girls in Papua New Guinea through all Australia-funded development programs, as well as the effective implementation of Government of Papua New Guinea programs and policies such as the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence 2016-2025.
5. We recognise that functional, affordable and accountable institutions are fundamental to service delivery and good governance. We will continue to cooperate to share knowledge, skills and experience to improve the accountability, transparency and capability of institutions, including through institutional twinning arrangements.

6. We acknowledge the Bougainville Peace Agreement is a national priority of the Government of Papua New Guinea. We commit to continue supporting the post-referendum process through the ongoing collaboration of Papua New Guinea and Autonomous Bougainville Government.

## **Pillar 2 – Close Friends, Enduring Ties**

7. We commit to further expanding and deepening our ties in all sectors and at all levels of our societies.
8. To promote ever-closer relations, we reaffirm our commitment to the annual Leaders' Dialogue and Australia-Papua New Guinea Ministerial Forum, as well as high-level meetings on security, economic, development, Torres Strait Treaty and other issues. We will also conduct regular high-level visits and parliamentary exchanges.
9. We recognise the diversity of the cultures that make up our societies. We will foster stronger links between Australia's Indigenous peoples and Papua New Guinea. We acknowledge the special status of the Torres Strait and Treaty villages as places of cultural exchange throughout our history and into the future.
10. We commit to promoting contemporary views of each other through the media, the arts and cultural exchange programs.
11. As two sporting nations, sport plays a critical role in connecting our people, promoting development and unity, building leadership skills, encouraging a healthy lifestyle and maximising economic opportunities. We commit to increasing the connections between our sporting institutions and teams, including by supporting promising athletes to achieve their potential and broadening participation in sports at all levels.
12. We commit to support the role of faith-based institutions, including churches, in national development, strengthening communities, and delivering vital social services. We commit to building more links between these institutions, including exchanges of visits between the leaders and members of churches. We will strengthen relations between Australia and rural Papua New Guinea communities, including through church partnerships.
13. Connectivity is critical to promoting cooperation and allows for citizens of both countries to take full advantage of the opportunities in education and training, business, employment, sports development, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people links.
14. We commit to working together towards streamlined travel facilitation to foster greater travel, exchange and people-to-people linkages.

15. We commit to working together to strengthen Papua New Guinea's document identity systems and enhance levels of travel document integrity.
16. We commit to support institution-to-institution partnerships and collaborations that forge people-to-people links. This includes programs such as the New Colombo Plan, the Australia Awards Program, the Papua New Guinea-Australia Network, the Emerging Leaders' Dialogue, and institutional partnerships at the tertiary level. We also commit to reviving and strengthening sister-city relations between towns and cities of both countries.
17. We note the importance of Kokoda in forging the bonds and friendship between the two countries and we will continue the existing partnership under the Kokoda Initiative, with a focus on protecting the region's unique environmental, cultural and military heritage.
18. We welcome Papua New Guinea's commitment to ensuring the Kokoda Track is well managed, and agree to continue cooperation under the Kokoda Initiative to expand opportunities for communities along the Track.

### **Pillar 3 – Economic Partnership for Prosperity**

19. The economic relationship between Papua New Guinea and Australia is one of mutual partnership aimed at fostering growth and the development of our economies, taking into account each other's special economic needs and opportunities.
20. We recognise the value of close cooperation and information sharing to address public health crises, and commit to further strengthen our cooperation, including to help mitigate the adverse impacts of pandemics such as COVID-19.
21. We acknowledge the importance of free and open trade and stable investment regimes for the development and prosperity of our peoples. We commit to exploring new options for trade arrangements between our two countries and a joint feasibility study to inform the process. We will work jointly to address impediments to trade and develop a bilateral trade framework arrangement for better market access.
22. As a necessary first step towards strengthening our current bilateral trade architecture, we commit to reviewing and modernising the Australia-Papua New Guinea Bilateral Investment Treaty (1990) to enhance business confidence and investor certainty, which should also benefit Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
23. We commit to upholding international trading rules, in accordance with our commitments and obligations as World Trade Organisation members, and will explore options for

greater economic engagement, including through bilateral and regional trade arrangements.

24. We recognise that the tourism and hospitality industry plays a significant role in directly improving the livelihood of local societies whilst maintaining sustainable development and growth of our economies, and undertake to consider how we can work more closely together to encourage the industry's development.
25. We commit to support macroeconomic and fiscal reforms that contribute to stability and strengthened financial management, including monetary policy reforms that are aligned to Papua New Guinea's economic and development priorities.
26. We will work jointly to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services delivered through Papua New Guinea's State Owned Enterprises (SOEs), with emphasis on governance, accountability and debt management.
27. We commit to continued cooperation on agriculture, food and water security; and to improve nutrition and promote agricultural trade.
28. To protect our unique natural environments and agricultural ecosystems, we commit to improve sanitary and phytosanitary measures and strengthen biosecurity systems and standards, while also seeking to facilitate increased trade.
29. We recognise that strategic and high-quality infrastructure projects are vital for economic prosperity. We commit to deepen cooperation on, and increase investments in critical economic infrastructure, including through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific. We will jointly determine infrastructure priorities for cooperation, and support the financing and implementation of priority projects where appropriate.
30. We commit to work together on Papua New Guinea's Connect PNG Program, including the Coral Sea Cable Project and the Papua New Guinea Electrification Partnership for infrastructure connectivity across the region, and work together on Papua New Guinea's domestic telecommunications strategy and infrastructure to fully realise the benefits of the Coral Sea Cable Project. We commit to working together with other partners on joint infrastructure priorities, such as the Papua New Guinea Electrification Partnership.
31. We commit to ongoing cooperation on development assistance, including through ensuring transparency and visibility in the determination of development cooperation priorities and funding allocations. We acknowledge Papua New Guinea's ambition to see 50 per cent of donor programs dedicated to supporting improved, high-quality social and economic infrastructure consistent with Medium Term Development Plans. We commit

to continue to prioritise infrastructure support through grant and other funding, balanced against other development priorities.

32. We recognise the mutual benefits of improved labour mobility for our countries and commit to expand cooperation in resourcing and capacity building, including increasing the number of Papua New Guineans participating in the Pacific Labour Scheme and Seasonal Worker Programme.
33. We acknowledge the private sector as key to driving economic cooperation and development and recognise the role our governments play in facilitating vibrant private sectors. We will continue to engage with the private sector in both countries, including through cooperation with business councils and the Papua New Guinea-Australia Ministerial Forum Business Dialogue.
34. We commit to exploring and developing our natural resources sustainably for the benefit of our peoples and future generations. We will promote closer business-led collaboration between our natural resources sectors, including in mining equipment and technology services, standards and research.
35. As Blue Pacific Ocean nations, we commit to maximise gains from our fisheries resources through sustainable management, and collaboration in surveillance of our Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and combating Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing in our waters. We support clean, healthy and productive oceans, the sustainable use of marine resources, the reduction of plastic and waste in our oceans, and the growth of the global blue economy.

#### **Pillar 4 – Strategic Cooperation for Security and Stability**

36. We recognise that security challenges are increasing, including greater uncertainty in the geopolitical environment, greater contestability within our region, pressure on established international rules and norms, transnational crime, cyber security threats and global health pandemics. These challenges require strengthened cohesion and coordination between all areas of our security cooperation.
37. As longstanding security partners, we share a mutual strategic interest in keeping our region safe and secure. We acknowledge the strong and enduring relationships between our security agencies, and recognise their contribution to creating a stable, peaceful and prosperous region.

38. We commit to develop a Bilateral Security Treaty to further promote our shared security interests and cooperation, including through dialogue on emerging challenges and threats that affect our respective security interests. The Treaty will also address other common interests, including crisis and disaster management, enhanced information sharing, strengthened border management, transnational crime, cyber security and land, air and maritime security.
39. We commit to expanding cooperation, coordination, joint activities, information sharing, capacity development and mutual assistance across our policing, defence, immigration, customs, intelligence, border security and law and justice institutions. We also commit to strengthen our cooperation on terrorism prevention and transnational crime.
40. Through our longstanding initiatives, such as the Defence Cooperation Program, we commit to expanding cooperation and interoperability in maritime security, force capability and infrastructure investment, including the Joint Initiative to redevelop Papua New Guinea's Lombrum Naval Base in Manus Province.
41. Through our Policing Partnership, we will continue to address challenges to law and order and build strong institutional linkages between our respective police forces.
42. We acknowledge the importance of safeguarding our critical infrastructure and industries, especially ports, power, roads and telecommunications. We commit to stronger cooperation to ensure our critical infrastructure remains resilient and secure. In this context, we recognise the importance of an open, free and secure Internet to drive economic growth, protect national security, and promote stability in cyberspace. We commit to continued engagement to strengthen our existing cooperation on cyber security, digital safety, and enhancing Papua New Guinea's information and communication technology sector.
43. We acknowledge the importance of secure and open sea-lanes to facilitate trade and free navigation in our region in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We commit to increase cooperation in the management of our borders, including through joint activities such as the maritime border patrol programs operating along the Torres Strait.
44. Reaffirming our commitment to the Paris Agreement, 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Security and the Papua New Guinea-Australia Climate Change Action Plan, we acknowledge the severe threat climate change poses to our people, our prosperity and the stability of our region. We commit to work together on climate change adaptation,



resilience and mitigation, including on sustainable forest management and the legal timber trade, coral reefs and fisheries, food security, blue carbon and climate finance.

45. Recognising that infectious diseases know no political boundaries, we commit to work together to strengthen health security and improve prevention, detection and response to communicable diseases and health threats, including through research and development.
46. We recognise the severe, immediate, and ongoing costs to people and economies affected by disasters. We commit to strengthen existing close cooperation to build resilience and assist each other when needed in response to natural disasters, including building capacity and strengthening institutional infrastructure.

## **Pillar 5 – Social and Human Development**

47. We reaffirm our commitment to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to drive human and social development.
48. We recognise that high-quality education and research is fundamental to human and economic development. We will enhance our cooperation to strengthen accredited institutions for delivery of Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET), secondary and tertiary qualifications. We will also support the work of research institutions, digitalisation of training and expanding professional connections, including the alumni networks.
49. Acknowledging the importance of health to growth and stability, we commit to strengthening cooperation between our health institutions, especially on financing, planning, infrastructure, information sharing and systems.
50. We will continue to work together to improve health care systems in Papua New Guinea, with a focus on strengthening health systems to deliver high-quality health services and to contain disease outbreaks. We acknowledge the importance of health security and enhanced cooperation to address challenges such as the COVID-19 threat to our people and economies.
51. We acknowledge existing work on social inclusion, including marginalised groups, persons with disabilities and the elderly. We will continue to promote social protection in the delivery of development programs.



## **Pillar 6 – Near Neighbours, Global Partners**

52. As neighbours, we share many common challenges that require coordinated solutions. Through the decades, we have demonstrated a successful, collaborative approach to addressing these challenges. We commit to continue this approach and to work together closely both bilaterally and as global partners.
53. We commit to continuing our close collaboration in APEC, as well as other fora, including the World Trade Organisation, the United Nations, and multilateral development and financial institutions.
54. As members of the wider Pacific family, we commit to working together and in regional bodies to ensure our region is secure strategically, stable economically and sovereign politically. We acknowledge the Pacific Islands Forum as the key forum for collectively addressing regional challenges. We reaffirm our commitment to implementing the regional frameworks adopted by Pacific Leaders under the 2018 Boe and 2000 Biketawa Declarations.
55. Reaffirming and understanding the principles outlined in the Boe Declaration, we commit to open consultation, information sharing and building bilateral and regional institutional partnerships. Initiatives such as the Australia-Pacific Security College and Pacific Fusion Centre will help advance this cooperation.

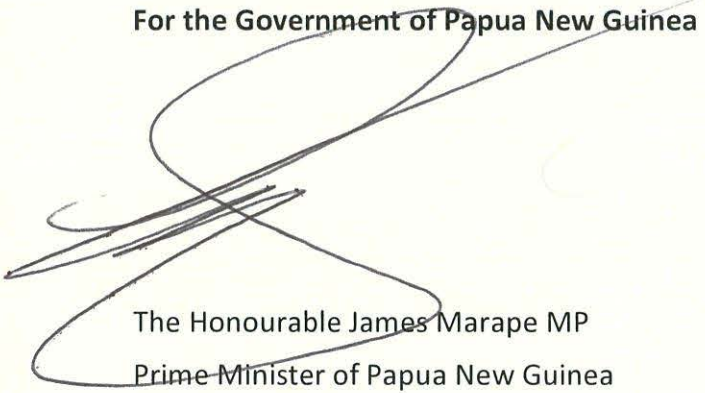
## **An Enduring Partnership**

56. We commit to strengthen cooperation on Papua New Guinea's priority regions and economic corridors to drive growth, enhance stability and improve service delivery.
57. We commit to cooperate on strengthening accredited training institutions in all sectors.
58. We commit to continue refining the way we work together in the area of development assistance, including consulting on how best to address Papua New Guinea's need for high-quality economic and social infrastructure. We will undertake a joint review on the use of Australian technical advisers to all sector programs.

59. We acknowledge our evolving relationship and commit to achieving our common objectives through the steps set out in this Partnership and through other mutually-determined bilateral arrangements as appropriate. To assist with implementing this Partnership, we also commit to officials developing an Action Plan to form the basis for reporting to Ministers on progress ahead of the annual Ministerial Forum.

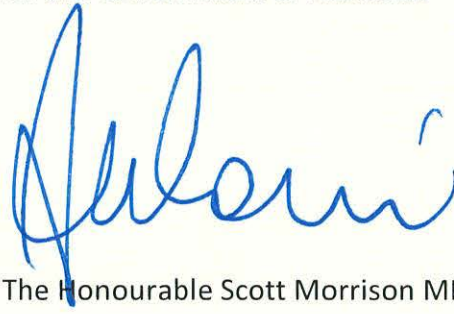
**Signed in duplicate on the fifth day of August 2020 in the English language both copies being equally valid.**

**For the Government of Papua New Guinea**



The Honourable James Marape MP  
Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

**For the Government of Australia**



The Honourable Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister of Australia