



## Australia India Business Council (AIBC) Ltd. NSW

# Media Release

8 August 2014

**AIBC NSW 2014 Annual Australia India Address: Keynote Address delivered by the Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Hon Tony Abbott MP, Prime Minister of Australia.**

**Tony Abbott: “Australia will elevate India to the position of Best Partner”.**

The Australia India Business Council (AIBC) NSW Chapter’s 2014 Annual Australia India Address, held on Thursday 7 August, emphasised the significance of trade and investment between Australia and India and the highest level of commitment given to this by the new governments of both nations.

The event held at the Four Seasons Hotel Sydney, was attended by The Hon. Julie Bishop MP Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs officially representing Hon Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia; The Hon Mike Baird MP, Premier of NSW; His Excellency Biren Nanda, High Commissioner of India to Australia; Mr. Sanjay Sudhir, Consul General of India in Sydney; AIBC National Chairman Dipen Rughani, National Vice Chair Sheba Nandkeolyar and AIBC NSW President John Cox.

Also present on this historic night were Australian Cricketer Brett Lee, Senator the Hon Concetta Fierravanti-Wells; The Hon Victor Dominello, MP NSW Minister for Citizenship and Communities; Ian Narev, Chief Executive CBA; John Harnden, Chief Executive ICC World Cup 2015 Australia, among other senior stakeholders from business and government.

Delivering the Keynote Address on behalf of the Prime Minister, Minister Bishop acknowledged the strong relationship between Australia and India now had a momentum that was unstoppable – two new governments, both committed to economic reform, both nations declaring proudly that they are open for business.

“Our Prime Minister was one of the first world leaders to contact new Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, inviting him to Australia for the G20 Leaders’ Summit and a bilateral visit,” she said.

“So we’re going to see our two action men, our two action Prime Ministers together on the world stage very shortly. They both have ambitious infrastructure agendas and with so much in common between our two leaders, we recognise the opportunity to broaden and deepen what is a strong relationship but could be far stronger.

“It has been 28 years since an Indian Prime Minister visited Australia. This year, 2014, we expect bilateral visits by both Prime Ministers.

"Australia and India are natural partners across the board, and Australia is keen on elevating India to the position of Best Partner of Business. The very best days of Australia India business lie ahead," Ms Bishop added.

Minister Bishop acknowledged the Australia-India Business Council for the work it was doing to build links between the two countries.

"Tonight I want to pay tribute to the Australia India Business Council for its 27 years of deep commitment to fostering the relationship between our two nations," she stated.

HE Biren Nanda in his Address provided an update on the dynamic changes led by the government of India's newly elected Prime Minister, Narendra Modi.

"Key projects included the National eGovernance Plan connecting all state and local government offices in every village and town in India. As well, India's new environmental policy would promote cleaner fuels to bring down pollution levels. Transport too, would be upgraded, with the Golden Quadrilateral Railways Project connecting Indian cities with high speed rail lines and expected to halve travel times.

"Mr Modi's government had successfully established a pro-business atmosphere for Australian investors," he added.

The Hon Mike Baird, Premier of NSW stated the economic partnership between NSW and India had been growing from strength to strength over the decades.

"I make a commitment to visit India at least once a year to take advantage of the huge opportunity that the country provides to NSW. Tourism, infrastructure projects in energy and transport, and financial services are key areas for both NSW and India to establish business relationships," he added.

Dipen Rughani AIBC National Chairman said the new Prime Minister Narendra Modi comes to the helm with a stellar record of achievements in the state of Gujarat. Mr Modi will look at repeating his success in Gujarat where he boosted growth by opening up the state for Indian and International businesses for investments.

"If Australia wants to be part of India's growth, it must invest in this relationship. Its time Australia sheds its risk-averse nature and accepted the challenge to benefit from India's opening markets. Japan, UK, China, France, USA have already embarked on plans to increase bilateral trade with India during Modi's tenure. Australia must not be left behind," he stated.

In her speech, Sheba Nandkeolyar, AIBC National Vice Cha spoke about AIBC's deep engagement in promoting bi-lateral ties between Australia & India. "Besides policy, planning & advocacy, AIBC regularly host and organise trade delegations to & from India. AIBC has been working closely with OIFC, FICCI, CII, AICC among others in India."

"AIBC has been leading delegations to the Vibrant Gujarat Summits and had led one of the largest delegations to Vibrant Gujarat Summit in 2013. The time is ripe for AIBC to drive the Australia – India business relationship even further."

AIBC NSW President John Cox welcomed guests and shared "AIBC NSW was a key state Chapter of the AIBC and played a pivotal role in facilitating bilateral trade between NSW and India – not only with a range of activities for its AIBC members, but also in working closely with Government Trade and Investment offices and their representatives based in India."

"We have had a very busy year so far and with delegations coming soon in relation to the IT industry, Vibrant Gujarat and the G20 it would seem to be a busy year to follow. Of Course there are also the cultural events surrounding the Diwali Festival in October to look forward to," he said.

Three businesses were felicitated with AIBC awards of excellence presented by Minister Bishop to Nitish Jain of SP Jain Global Management Institute, Rituraj Sinha and George Chin of MSS Security and DD Saxena of Riverina Oils & Bio Energy Pty Ltd( ROBE).

Other highlights included the display of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2015 and CEO John Harnden's overview on the one of the greatest sporting events to happen in 2015.

Cricket is a great bond between Australia & India and Brett Lee's conversation with MC Kartik Mohandas was a great hit. The attending business leaders were moved to learn about 'Mewsic' a Brett Lee Foundation, and its unique work being done of ' Healing, Educating & Empowering 'sick & poor children in India through Music.

Graham Putt, EGM CBA delivered the Vote of Thanks as AIBC'S platinum sponsor.

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