



Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Partnership between the Commonwealth of Australia and Brunei Darussalam



1. The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia and Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam decide to establish a Comprehensive Partnership between the Commonwealth of Australia and Brunei Darussalam.
2. Australia and Brunei Darussalam's historical links date back to 1945 during Australia's participation in Operation OBOE VI including through the Muara Beach landings. Our longstanding partnership was formalised in 1984 when our two countries established diplomatic relations. This Comprehensive Partnership underscores our shared commitment to strengthen and expand these longstanding ties.
3. In declaring this Comprehensive Partnership, Australia and Brunei Darussalam reaffirm our commitment to a region that is stable, peaceful, prosperous, secure and resilient, and underpinned by respect for the United Nations Charter, international law, sovereignty, open markets and the rules-based international order.
4. Brunei Darussalam welcomes Australia's continued support for ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture. Australia and Brunei Darussalam reiterate our commitment to support a regional architecture that is open, transparent and rules-based, and built upon ASEAN-led mechanisms, particularly the East Asia Summit as the region's premier Leader-led forum for discussion of strategic issues, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus.
5. Brunei Darussalam welcomes Australia's ongoing support for and cooperation with ASEAN under the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and commitment to supporting the concrete implementation of the key areas identified in the AOIP within ASEAN-led mechanisms namely connectivity, maritime cooperation, Sustainable Development Goals, and economic and other possible areas of cooperation, to promote mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual benefit through ASEAN-led mechanisms, as well as to contribute to peace, stability and prosperity in the region.
6. On the basis of these guiding principles and objectives, Australia and Brunei Darussalam decide to forge a Comprehensive Partnership focused on the following areas of cooperation:

Economic, Climate Change and Food Security

7. Australia and Brunei Darussalam commit to work together to reinforce the rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, free, inclusive, equitable and transparent multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. We will seek to enhance two-way trade and investment between our two countries and promote trade and investment in key sectors. Australia and Brunei Darussalam will explore opportunities to expand trade and investment cooperation.

8. To sustain economic growth and our mutual prosperity, we will continue to seek to enhance the free trade agreements between our countries. Brunei Darussalam's role as the ASEAN Country Coordinator for the Agreement Establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA) made an important contribution to achieving the substantial conclusion of AANZFTA upgrade negotiations. Australia and Brunei Darussalam will continue our valued partnership under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP). Our ongoing cooperation under these high-quality agreements will continue to underpin our mutual commitment to regional economic integration, resilience and prosperity.

9. Australia and Brunei Darussalam will continue to work closely together to maintain and support the high standards of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). Our close economic cooperation will also continue as we progress outcomes under the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

10. Australia and Brunei Darussalam recognise the importance of peaceful, secure and resilient cyberspace that serves as an enabler in driving economic growth, enhance connectivity and improving the quality of living standards in our modern digital society. To strengthen this development, we are committed to work together towards information sharing, research and development. We welcome the exchange of views, best practices and joint activities in promoting a secure and resilient cyberspace, the protection of National Critical Infrastructure, CERT-to-CERT collaboration, digital forensics, strengthening identity security, including digital identity, and other initiatives and programs to enhance cybersecurity and counter cybercrime.

11. We acknowledge the significant impacts the climate crisis is having in our region and the importance of taking urgent and ambitious climate action to deliver on the goals of the *Paris Agreement*. Australia is proud to support the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change to be hosted in Brunei Darussalam. We are committed to supporting the net-zero transition in our region, and will explore opportunities to cooperate on clean trade and investment, including in the rollout of renewable energy sources and low carbon technologies in both countries, and ASEAN's energy priorities, including the ASEAN Power Grid.

12. Both countries recognise the importance of food security and maintaining open markets for agri-food trade. We will work together to strengthen food supply chains, promote sustainable agriculture practices and grow our respective agri-food sectors while exploring opportunities to strengthen and harmonise food safety standards.

Defence, Security and Maritime

13. Defence and security cooperation is a key and longstanding pillar of our relationship. Our Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Defence Activities decided in 1999 recognises our shared interest in peace and stability in the region. We welcome the practical contributions being made by the Australia-Brunei Darussalam Joint Defence Working Committee (JDWC) and working groups between respective armed services and each other's commitment to transparency of defence strategy and planning, which sets a powerful example for the region.

14. Australia and Brunei Darussalam commit to deepen defence cooperation, as reflected by our exchange of resident Defence Advisers. We will enhance our strategic dialogue, information sharing, training and education; add further complexity to our existing defence exercises, including through Australia's flagship regional activity, Indo-Pacific Endeavour; increase the tempo of visits to Brunei Darussalam by Australian defence aircraft and maintain effective logistics support arrangements.

15. Both countries commit to continued close cooperation within the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) framework, and recall with pride our successful co-chairing of the Experts' Working Group on Military Medicine (2021 – 2024).

16. We reaffirm the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, stability, maritime safety and security, freedom of navigation and overflight in the region, consistent with international law including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We emphasise the importance of enhancing mutual trust and confidence, exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability, and avoiding actions that may further complicate the situation. We reaffirm the need for states to pursue the peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS, which sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out.

17. Australia and Brunei Darussalam commit to working together to strengthen maritime safety and security and marine biodiversity. We will cooperate to improve maritime domain awareness for the region, including through working with regional partners. We will share information and build capacity to address maritime security challenges, including to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and to promote marine biodiversity protection, and to enhance understanding of UNCLOS.

18. We will continue to cooperate closely on security challenges, including through implementation of our Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism, signed in 2005, which provides for cooperation on customs, finance, immigration, intelligence, law enforcement, security and transport.

19. We commit to exchanging financial intelligence, including under the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) -Brunei Darussalam Central Bank information sharing Memorandum of Understanding signed in February 2023, to assist in identifying and disrupting illicit financial flows associated with transnational, serious and organised crime that impacts our countries.

Social-Cultural

20. Australia and Brunei Darussalam welcome the strong and growing people-to-people links that exist across all levels of society and across a broad spectrum of business, academic, media, religious, cultural, youth, sports, community, tourism and non-governmental organisations. Both countries will seek to strengthen tourism and international education links and cooperation.

21. Brunei Darussalam welcomes the contribution Australia's New Colombo Plan, the Australia for ASEAN Scholarships and vocational scholarships under the Australia for ASEAN Digital Transformation and Future Skills Initiative have made to strengthening the bonds between our two countries. Both countries will seek to increase the links between our education authorities and providers, including for the purposes of increasing two-way student mobility, joint academic research and dialogue on early childhood education.

22. Australia and Brunei Darussalam reaffirm our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We will respect, promote and fulfil our commitments to international human rights instruments and agreements to which we are a party. We also express our commitment to constructive participation in the Universal Periodic Review process.

23. We will build on existing health cooperation, particularly bilateral and ASEAN-led initiatives to strengthen mental health. Both countries will also continue to strengthen cooperation on pharmaceutical regulation, including under the Memorandum of Understanding between Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Brunei Darussalam Medicines Control Authority.

Plan of Action

24. To realise the Comprehensive Partnership, the Prime Minister of Australia and His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam will assign their Minister for Foreign Affairs and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs respectively to formulate a Joint Plan of Action in the above-mentioned areas. Australia and Brunei Darussalam will review progress against the Joint Plan of Action through ministerial engagement and annual Senior Officials' Talks.

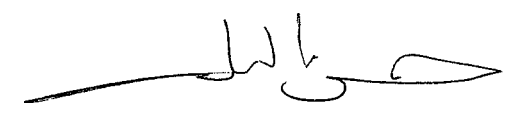
Signed in duplicate in Canberra on the 19th day of June 2023.

**On behalf of the Government of the
Commonwealth of Australia**



The Honourable Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister

**On behalf of the Government of His Majesty
the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei
Darussalam**



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of
Brunei