



MEDIA RELEASE
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Abbott and Key must take the relationship forward

The ANZAC Centenary year presents an opportunity for Australia and New Zealand to take their relationship to the next level.

In recent years, the relationship has become stagnant.

Promises to create a common border have come to nothing.

Years of work on establishing the Australia-New Zealand Therapeutic Products Authority has been scrapped.

The question of mutual recognition of imputation credits remain unresolved.

Plans to provide a pathway to citizenship for 200,000 New Zealanders living Australia have been shelved and instead the Australian Government has continued to chip away further at their rights.

Minor reforms continue behind the scenes, but these have little tangible effect on the lives of ordinary Australians and New Zealanders. The bigger picture is ignored. The sort of bold thinking that set in motion Closer Economic Relations over thirty years ago is missing.

This year, we call upon Tony Abbott and John Key to seize upon this significant anniversary to strengthen the relationship.

Long-standing disagreements must be resolved in line with their stated aim of creating a seamless Australasian economy in which people, goods, and capital move freely. To achieve this, all of these things must be treated equally without regard to whether they originated in Australia or New Zealand.

The current restrictions on the rights of New Zealanders in Australia are a particularly grievous example of failure in this regard, denying New Zealanders equality within the Single Market in regard to economic, social, and educational opportunities among others. Not only are these policies economically distortionary, they are a significant irritant in the relationship and undermine trans-Tasman goodwill.

However, we not only encourage the prime ministers to resolve outstanding issues, but to put forward bold new initiatives that will place the relationship on a firmer footing for the future.

The significant opportunity this year presents must not be squandered. A similar opportunity is not likely to arise any time soon. Now is the time to end the drift and set out a convincing plan for our nations' future together.

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