

## Summary - The *Sydney Roundtable* Admiralty House, Sydney, Monday 2 March 2020



His Excellency General David Hurley AC Governor General of Australia and Mrs Hurley hosted the Global Foundation's *Sydney Roundtable* at Admiralty House on Monday, 2 March 2020.

The *Sydney Roundtable*\* was the second in an *Australian Roundtable series*, that began with the *Melbourne Roundtable* on 27 November last year and will culminate with the *Perth Roundtable* on 21 October 2020, following which a final report from the series will be published and widely circulated.

The focus of the *Sydney Roundtable* was: '**Australia's national strategy for the future, taking a longer-term view and in a global context**'. In accordance with usual policy, the meeting was conducted according to the Chatham House rule.

Themes covered included:

- Australian identity and national self-confidence to plan strategically for the future.
- Pathways to a greener future – technological, financial and policy solutions for Australia.
- Australia's global engagement, including on development issues, AI regulation, and health expertise.

\*Please see attached for the booklet containing the Program, Attendees and key biographies.

\*\* Photos from the *Sydney Roundtable* will become available on the website shortly and a link will be forwarded.

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### **Australian Roundtable series**

The 50 invited participants to the Sydney meeting represented a diverse cross-section of international, national and local interests. They included: Sir Danny Alexander, Vice President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank; Dr Philip Lowe, Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia; Right Rev. Kay Goldsworthy, Anglican Archbishop of Perth; Mr John McFarlane, Chairman-elect of Westpac; His Excellency Christophe Penot, French Ambassador to Australia; Ms Louise Watson, Chairman of the Global Foundation and leaders of the Foundation's most prominent corporate partners, including global asset manager, Amundi; global law firm, King & Wood Mallesons; and global Australian advisory firm, GHD.

Also taking part were vice chancellors of Australian universities, international media contributors and Australian business and community leaders, including Ms Kristy McBain, the Mayor of Bega Shire, that was at the epicentre of the devastating summer bushfires.

### **Some key conclusions from the Sydney Roundtable**

A step-change is required in national thinking about regional Australia, in its early stages of a long journey of recovery from bushfires and drought, so that stronger and more resilient regional communities emerge as an integral part of future national strategy.

A strong and passionate commitment was expressed in support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, as a centrepiece of the topic of Australia's national identity. Indigenous Australia sits at the heart of who we are as a nation, which is pivotal to developing a successful and lasting national strategy.

Australian ingenuity and goodwill should be harnessed to meet and overcome the challenge of climate change and related environmental issues, both at home and abroad. The full suite of technologies should be explored, together with sound long-term policy frameworks. Business and investors are willing to play a leadership role, if there is such certainty over the longer term.

Australia's future economic and strategic viability also requires it to step up internationally, in support of greater international collaboration and multilateralism. Australia should be a stronger contributor where it has reputation and special expertise, in areas such as public health and legal systems; in guiding the future of Artificial Intelligence towards human-centred benefits; and in partnering with like-minded nations in its immediate region as well as globally.

Case studies from two outstanding community leaders and innovators inspired the meeting with their respective projects. Ms Alice Mahar spoke about [The Corner Store Network](#), that is literally 'preserving the future' through a brilliant system of transportable industrial kitchens; and Ms Sally Irwin spoke about [The Freedom Hub](#), which is restoring the lives and dignity of dozens of women in Australia who have been the victims of human trafficking.

Participants concluded that we need to be compassionate, confident and courageous in advancing a national strategy for Australia, in a global context. Further, they agreed that the model of '**co-operative globalisation**' that the Global Foundation has successfully championed globally over recent years, should also underpin Australia's national strategy.

A spirit of commitment to stronger trust and partnership between business and communities was welcomed, to add scale and dimension to positive solutions to precede official actions.

A memorable highlight of the *Sydney Roundtable* was Mrs Hurley leading a sing-along of "You Are My Sunshine", an uplifting conclusion to an exceptional event.

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The outcomes from the *Sydney Roundtable* discussions will help to inform the *Rome Roundtable*, the next in the Foundation's *Global Roundtable series*, to be held on 18 & 19 June and the *Perth Roundtable*, to be held on 21 October, 2020, for which the Governor of Western Australia, Hon Kim Beazley AC will kindly host and the Archbishop of Canterbury will be guest of honour.