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*Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the establishment  
of Australia's first official diplomatic mission in Malaysia,  
then Malaya, in 1955.*



**Australian Government**  

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**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

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## FOREWORD

by Australian Prime Minister the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP

I am delighted to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Australia's diplomatic presence in Malaysia with this special publication.

*60 Years: Australia in Malaysia* celebrates six decades of friendship between Australia and Malaysia.

The beginning of diplomatic relations between our two nations predates Malaysia's independence, with the establishment in 1955 of an Australian Commission in Kuala Lumpur in then Malaya.

Two years later, Australia was among the first countries to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Federation of Malaya after independence.

Relations between our people began long before formal ties were established, tracing back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when Malayan pearl divers travelled to northern Australia.

Over the years, Australians and Malaysians have built enduring partnerships across almost every field.

Our governments cooperate extensively on defence, law enforcement and national security.

This cooperation began when Australian soldiers fought in defence of Malaya in World War II and has grown over time into a mature partnership that helps deliver security and stability to the region.

The search for Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 demonstrated our capacity to work closely together, even during national tragedies.

Trade has flourished between our economies, to the mutual benefit of both countries. Two-way trade has doubled in the past 10 years and we now rank among each other's top ten trading partners.

Our citizens have formed a genuine affection towards each other through long-standing links in education, migration and booming tourism.

*60 Years: Australia in Malaysia* provides a snapshot of the breadth of our connections and an insight into some of the personal stories that form the foundation of the warm relations between our two nations.

I hope readers will enjoy learning more about our shared history. I look forward to a prosperous future working together.







## FOREWORD

by Malaysian Prime Minister the Right Honourable  
Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak

2015 is indeed a special year as it marked an important milestone in the relations between Malaysia and Australia. It is the 60th Anniversary of Australia's presence in Malaysia. I am thus honoured and welcome this publication commemorating this milestone.

Though many might not be fully aware, relations between Malaysia and Australia have stretched way back even before Malaysia achieved her independence in 1957. Since then the relations between our two countries have been making great strides and further cemented through the various mutually beneficial endeavours and programmes, including trade, investment, education, defence and security.

Our people-to-people links are broad and deep, fortified by active exchanges of visits at various level, as well as cultural exchange programmes. Education has been and will continue to feature in our bilateral relations especially since Australia continues to be one of the most popular destinations for Malaysian students to pursue their tertiary education.

Defence cooperation is another important pillar in our bilateral relations. Our cooperation has evolved from the Five Power Defence Arrangements and is further strengthened through the Malaysia-Australia Joint Defence Program. Malaysia appreciates the excellent defence relationship with Australia and the close interaction between our forces.

Trade relations, meanwhile, continue to grow and Australia remains a key economic partner for Malaysia. Australia has consistently been Malaysia's top ten trading partner throughout all these years.

I wish to take this opportunity to express Malaysia's appreciation for the efforts and contributions made by the Government of Australia in the MH370 and MH17 tragedies respectively. Australia has indeed proven itself to be an invaluable friend when it offered assistance and cooperation without hesitation or delay.

Finally, my heartiest congratulations on the special publication entitled *60 Years: Australia in Malaysia*.



## INTRODUCTION

Australia's relationship with Malaysia is a long and significant one. Even before 1955, when an Australian Commission was established in Kuala Lumpur, relations had grown around regional and bilateral trading networks, shared experiences of war, and people-to-people contacts. From the nineteenth century, Australians were involved in the economy of the Malay states and in the twentieth century tin and rubber were particularly important to Australia's economic and industrial development. In the post-war era, Malaya became a key Southeast Asian ally for Australia, central to its strategic planning in the region.<sup>1</sup> Today Malaysia sits among Australia's top ten trading partners and it ranks second among Australia's trade with the 10 ASEAN nations.<sup>2</sup> Our two nations share many common interests, in our parliamentary, legal and administrative systems and in the networks of multilateral cooperation that bind us in our region.

### OUR TWO NATIONS SHARE MANY COMMON INTERESTS THAT BIND US IN OUR REGION

As our trade and security relationship has progressed, our friendship has deepened through connections between our people fostered by education, migration, tourism, business, sport and the arts. Our educational relationship is enduring, beginning with the Colombo Plan in the 1950s. It was reported in 1956 that of the 309 Colombo Plan students sitting for a Bachelor's degree in Australia, 'the most successful national group was Malayan, with a 93 per cent pass rate.'<sup>3</sup> Now, on average, over 20 000 Malaysian students enrol to study in Australia each year, with another 20 000 studying on an Australian university campus in Malaysia.<sup>4</sup> In 2015, we further demonstrated our joint commitment to education with the launch in Malaysia of the New Colombo Plan.

Australian High Commissioner Tom Critchley meeting Malayan Colombo Plan Students bound for Australia, 1963.



The tourism sector has also contributed significantly to our networks of people-to-people contact. In 1975, 28 270 Australians travelled to Malaysia, a number that increased tenfold over the next four decades to 571 328 in 2014.<sup>5</sup> The number of Malaysians visiting Australia has increased even more significantly. In 1975, 9568 Malaysian visitors came to Australia; in 2014 this had swelled to 324 500.<sup>6</sup> Over six decades Australians' familiarity with Malaysia has become more personal. For many, for example, the Sandakan Memorial Park in Sabah, where 2400 Australian and British prisoners of war died during the Pacific War, has become a site of pilgrimage on Anzac Day and Sandakan Memorial Day.

Well before the Commonwealth of Australia and the Federation of Malaysia were imagined, however, our people had been coming into contact. Four centuries ago, in 1606, the Spanish explorer, Luis Vaez de Torres, sighted Malay boats traversing the Gulf of Carpentaria. Possibly these carried early *tre pang* fisherman from the eastern Indo-Malaysian Archipelago who



were recorded in the 18th century as living and trading with Indigenous Australians.<sup>7</sup> Today, imprints of the Malay language on Indigenous languages remain in Australia's far north.<sup>8</sup> In the 19th century, Malays became part of Australia's burgeoning pearling industry, which attracted workers from across the region. By 1900, before Japanese pearl divers came to dominate the industry, Malay divers were the majority group, with almost 500 living and working in and around Broome.<sup>9</sup>

These contacts provide only a glimpse into the early foundations laid for today's Australia–Malaysia relationship. Other links were quietly forged in the colonial era and more recently, as the stories in this book will reveal, there have been many individual contributions to both countries' future prosperity and friendship. One example is the early association between George Town in Penang and Adelaide in South Australia, which led to a Sister City link being formalised in 1973. Well over a century earlier, Colonel William Light, the son of Captain Francis Light—who acquired Penang on behalf of the British East India Company in 1786—founded the city of Adelaide in 1836 as its Surveyor General.<sup>10</sup> Adelaide has continued to feature as home to some of Australia's best known Malaysian–Australians—such as recording artist Kamahl and *Australian Idol* winner and



*Eurovision* entrant Guy Sebastian, celebrity chefs Adam Liaw and Poh Ling Yeow, and Labor Senator for South Australia Penny Wong—and the Sister City heritage ties remain strong.

Commemorating 60 years of Australia’s diplomatic presence in Kuala Lumpur returns us to the 1950s, a tumultuous decade for Southeast Asia. Much of the region decoupled from its colonial past in the immediate post-war years and as it did so, new alliances—and non-alliances—were formed. In September 1954, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation was formalised and, little more than six months later, in April 1955, the Asian–African Conference at Bandung in Indonesia signalled the birth of the Non-Aligned Movement. While the first Indochina War in Vietnam had come to its unresolved settlement, Communist insurgencies elsewhere in Southeast Asia continued to undermine stability in the region.

In November 1955, Australia’s Minister for External Affairs Richard Casey declared that ‘it was now appropriate and desirable for Australia to have a full-time Australian Representative at Kuala Lumpur’ where constitutional developments were carrying the Federation of Malaya towards self-government.<sup>11</sup> Two months earlier, HM (Max) Loveday had been sent to Kuala Lumpur as Assistant Commissioner to the Australian Commissioner to Southeast Asia based in Singapore. Following Casey’s statement, TK (Tom) Critchley was appointed as Australia’s first Commissioner in Malaya, a post he took up on 7 December 1955.

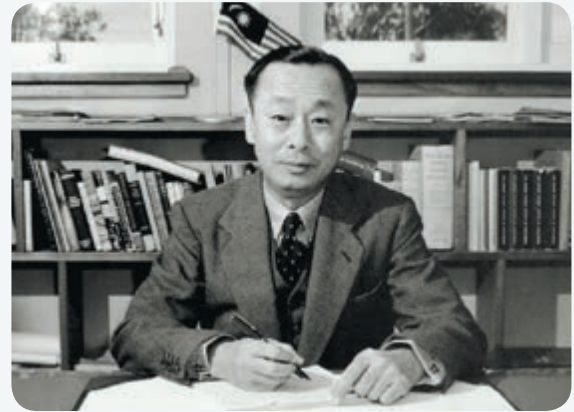




Opening of the High Commission of the Federation of  
Malaya in Australia by Tunku Abdul Rahman, 1959.



Malaya, in turn, established its first Commission in Canberra on 20 November 1956. The first Commissioner was Dato' Nik Kamil Mahmood<sup>12</sup> who was followed in August 1957 by Dato' Gunn Lay Teik,<sup>13</sup> who remained in Canberra until May 1960. The Commissions in Kuala Lumpur and Canberra became High Commissions when the Federation of Malaya formally became independent on 31 August 1957.



The High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya Dato' Gunn Lay Teik, in his office in Canberra, 1957.



The Australian High Commission building in Kuala Lumpur was opened for business on the 12 June 1978, after a construction period of 30 months. Prior to this, the Australian High Commission was located in the Great Eastern Building on Jalan Ampang.





Australia's relations with Malaya were close during these formative years, not least due to their shared outlook as members of the Commonwealth. In 1957, also, Sir William McKell, a former Governor-General of Australia, together with four other Commonwealth jurists, was involved in the Reid Commission that helped draft the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya. In the same year, Australia successfully sponsored Malaya's membership of the United Nations, granted on 17 September 1957. Four years later, in 1961, as the United Kingdom sought to decolonise the last of its Southeast Asian territories, negotiations began on a proposal to incorporate the Federation of Malaya, the Crown Colony of Singapore, and the North Borneo territories of Sabah (British North Borneo) and Sarawak into a wider federation. Australia supported the proposal, believing it

Malayan Independence Celebrations in Sydney on 31 August 1959. Australian Governor General Sir William McKell (second from left) with, from left, the Counsellor and Trade Commissioner of Malaya Mr Abdullah Ali and his wife, and the grandson of Malaya's Paramount Ruler, Tunku Mizam Tunku Ma'amur.



offered the best chance for peace and stability in the region, and committed to seeking regional and international backing for the new federation. On 16 September 1963, the Federation of Malaysia was born. Australia continued to be a staunch friend to the new nation. Indonesia objected to the new arrangement and between 1963 and 1965 tensions were high between the two neighbours, prompting Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies to pledge Australian military assistance to defend Malaysia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The Malaysian High Commissioner to Australia, Dato' Suleiman Dato Abdul Rahman, hosting a reception at the Hotel Canberra to celebrate the establishment of the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963. Attended by more than 600 guests, including Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies, it was one of the largest National Day celebrations ever held in Canberra.

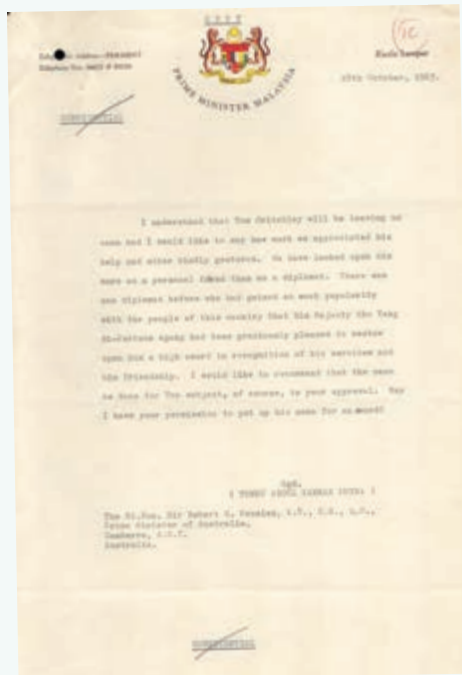


Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman with Australian High Commissioner Tom Critchley.

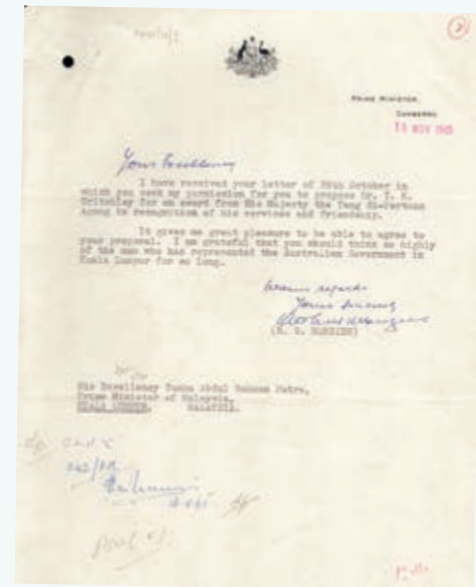
High Commissioner Tom Critchley, who represented Australia's interests in Malaya and Malaysia through this turbulent period, remains Australia's longest serving diplomatic representative to Malaysia, and his decade in Kuala Lumpur was one of personal warmth in the relationship. In August 1962, when Critchley was married at his home in Kuala Lumpur, guests included the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Harun Putra KCMG, the Sultan of Selangor, the Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak and several Cabinet Ministers.<sup>14</sup> When the Critchleys' daughter was born in December 1964, she was named Karen Laurie, so her initials would be KL.<sup>15</sup>



Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman regarded the High Commissioner 'more as a personal friend than a diplomat' to Malaya. The Tunku sought approval to bestow a title from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong upon Critchley 'in recognition of his services and his friendship'.<sup>16</sup> Menzies replied that it would give him 'great pleasure to be able to agree' to the proposal,<sup>17</sup> and so Dato' Tom Critchley became the first, and only, Australian diplomat to receive this honour. In *The Straits Times*, echoing the Tunku's recognition that friendship was the hallmark of the Australia–Malaysia relationship during his tenure, Dato' Critchley reflected, 'I have made many good friends' and he felt sure those friendships would endure.<sup>18</sup> His departure was marked by 'an enormous two-day golf and feasting party'.<sup>19</sup>



A letter from Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies, commending High Commissioner Thomas Critchley on his service and friendship to Malaysia, 1965.



Letter from Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies to Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, in response to commendation of High Commissioner Thomas Critchley, 1965.



This was also a time of major stresses and strains in international relations due to the superpower rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States. Maintaining security and stability in the region was a prime focus for both countries and the Australia–Malaya partnership worked closely together towards achieving this goal. As early as 1949, Australia, Britain and New Zealand had reached an agreement, known as ANZAM—Australia, New Zealand and Malaya—which provided for Commonwealth defence planning in the region. Australia played a pivotal role in ANZAM and, in 1955, its deployment of forces from all three services to the Malaya–Singapore region represented its first overseas military commitment in peacetime.<sup>20</sup> Further defence measures were then put in place under the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) in 1957, which allowed for British troops to remain in Malaya after independence. Malaysia’s first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman suggested Australian and New Zealand observers be invited to attend AMDA meetings and in April 1959, they both signed agreements formalising their AMDA membership.<sup>21</sup> The AMDA and ANZAM agreements made way for the still current Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) between Australia, Britain, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore drawn up after Britain formally withdrew all its military capability east of Suez in 1971.

The British withdrawal signalled a shift, though not a diminution of importance, in Australia–Malaysia relations. During the 1960s and 1970s Malaysia focused increasingly on building regional linkages. In 1967, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand joined to form ASEAN. In 1971, it declared Southeast Asia a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. At that time, Malaysia also joined the Non-Aligned Movement. Australia welcomed the formation of the ASEAN regional grouping. Indeed, in the early 1960s External Affairs Minister Sir Garfield Barwick had seen the importance of a process of regional Southeast Asian dialogue<sup>22</sup> and this sentiment has endured. In 1974, Australia became ASEAN’s first Dialogue Partner.<sup>23</sup>

In the past 40 years Australia and Malaysia have deepened cooperation in the region through shared membership of key arrangements. Both have been at the forefront of some of these regional developments. In 1989, inspired by ideas of ‘open regionalism’, the Hawke Government initiated the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).<sup>24</sup> In 2005, under the Abdullah Badawi Government, the *Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit* brought the East Asia Summit into being and it is now considered the key forum in the Asia–Pacific. Australia and Malaysia also share membership of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meetings Plus and the Indian Ocean Rim Association.

Australia’s economic engagement with Malaya has also been evident from the 1950s. In 1956, about 10 per cent of Australia’s Colombo Plan budget went to Malaya, and this increased to around 30 per cent in 1970.<sup>25</sup> Our trade relationship was also formalised in the early years of diplomatic relations. In 1958, under the Menzies Government, Australia and Malaya signed their first trade agreement—the first such commitment by Australia in Southeast Asia—and this was revised by the Whitlam Government in 1974 to provide for greater flexibility on tariffs.<sup>26</sup> Trade, across six decades, has continued in a steady upward trajectory. A bilateral Malaysia–Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA) was signed in May 2012 and came into force in January 2013. This built on the plurilateral ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), which came into effect in 2010, more deeply committing Australia and Malaysia to regional trade and investment.

Our investment partnership has grown more gradually but has nevertheless increased over the past few decades. In 1990, Malaysia–Australia two-way investment accounted for only 1 per cent of Australia’s two-way investment relationships in Asia. This placed it behind Australia’s investment relationships with all the major Asian economies. By 2012, however, this situation had improved considerably, and our two-way investment stood at

8 per cent of Australian investment in Asia.<sup>27</sup> Between 2010 and 2013, two-way investment more than doubled, to A\$26 billion in 2013.<sup>28</sup> It remained steady at that rate into 2014, and investment momentum is developing in several key areas.<sup>29</sup>

Over the 60 years since the establishment of a diplomatic presence in Kuala Lumpur, the Australia–Malaysia partnership has gone from strength to strength. When it was established in 2005, marking 50 years of relations, the Australia–Malaysia Institute (AMI) set its mission:

*To promote Australia's interests in Malaysia by initiating and supporting activities designed to enhance awareness, links and understanding between people and institutions in Australia and Malaysia.*<sup>30</sup>

The AMI, together with a range of organisations, including the Malaysia–Australia Business Council (MABC) established in 1986 and the Australia–Malaysia Business Council (AMBC)—formed in 1987 to promote trade, investment, economic cooperation and tourism between the two countries—have helped make the Australia–Malaysia partnership a bilateral success story. It is remarkable to review what we have achieved since 1955.



Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and her Malaysian counterpart, Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, discussing strong bilateral relations at a press conference in Malaysia, February 2014.



Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia Rod Smith marks the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of Australia's diplomatic presence in Malaysia, January 2015.





In honour of this 60-year milestone, this publication returns to key moments in our relationship, reviews the progress we have made and the friendships that have formed, and considers the future for Australia–Malaysia relations. Across four chapters we focus on the principal areas of engagement—our history, political relations, defence and security ties, and trade and investment. We then look at the dynamic education ties, from the Colombo Plan of the 1950s, ‘60s and ‘70s, to the New Colombo Plan of the twenty-first century, that have added intellectual capital to our relationship, and cemented people-to-people connections. Finally, we delve further into those connections by looking at immigration, tourism, the arts and sport.

As we will discover, the richness of the relations that have evolved over six decades justifies optimism that we will share an equally dynamic future.

# 1959



Australian Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies with Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, at a reception dinner during Menzies' visit to Malaysia in 1959.

# 19



Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam with Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein in Malaysia, 1974.



# 74

# 1977



Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Hussein Onn welcoming Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser to Malaysia in 1977.

# 1984

# 19



Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke and Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at a reception dinner in Malaysia in 1984.



Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad with Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating during his visit to Malaysia in 1996.



# 96

# 2005



Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Badawi with Australian Prime Minister John Howard in 2005.

# 2008

# 20



Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd with Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Badawi during his visit to Malaysia in 2008.



Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak with Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard in Canberra, 2011.

# 2014



Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak with Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott in Putrajaya during his visit to Malaysia in 2014.





# CHAPTER 1



Royal Malaysian Navy officers visit HMAS Arunta at the port of Kemaman, Malaysia, 2015.

Securing our Region and  
Building Prosperity

Defence and security cooperation between Australia and Malaysia has been a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship. Before our 60 years of formal engagement, during World War II, we fought side-by-side in the Malayan Campaign and suffered together under Japanese occupation. For both Australia and Malaya, the years 1941 to 1945—followed by the Malayan Emergency and *Konfrontasi* in the 1950s and 1960s—defined our history of defence cooperation. Shared national interests, formalised under the Australia, New Zealand and Malaya (ANZAM) arrangement in 1949 and the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement (AMDA) in 1957, and later the still current Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) in 1971, highlighted the priority of regional peace and security for both governments.

## DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND MALAYSIA HAS BEEN A CORNERSTONE OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

In the twenty-first century, together, we face new challenges. Australia's *Defence White Paper 2013* noted that the 'significant bilateral defence relationship with Malaysia is based on mutual interests and a shared history of operational deployments.'<sup>1</sup> While that history of operational deployment was first framed by the traditional concerns of defending territory, our contemporary interests respond to a more complex security environment. Non-traditional security concerns now encompass threats such as terrorism, transnational crime, natural disasters, cyber security, climate change, and public health epidemics.<sup>2</sup> Australia and Malaysia work closely together—on both a bilateral and multilateral basis—on all of these issues.



## The Pacific War

### *The Malayan Campaign*

The Pacific War was traumatic for both Australians and Malaysians. When the Japanese landed in Malaya on 8 December 1941, it was anticipated that Commonwealth forces, including Australian, would halt their advance. Initially, that appeared possible. In early January 1942, at Gemencheh Bridge near Gemas in Negeri Sembilan, Australians ‘inflicted on the Japanese their first and only setback in a dramatic ambush’, trapping some 1100 Japanese soldiers making their way over the bridge by bicycle.<sup>3</sup> A few weeks later, in what the British Commander, General Percival, called ‘one of the epics of the Malayan campaign’, Australian troops, having quickly advanced down the Malaya Peninsula to Johor, carried out further ambushes at Jemaluang, Muar and Bakri, inflicting further casualties.<sup>4</sup> Australia’s losses were heavy. Although they made up only around 14 per cent of the Commonwealth forces protecting Malaya, the Australians suffered 73 per cent of those killed in action.<sup>5</sup>

Japan’s air and artillery bombardment of Singapore in February 1942 saw the Malayan Campaign reach its tragic conclusion. Australian, British, Indian and Malay soldiers were involved in the campaign’s final struggle. It was at the Battles of Pasir Panjang and Bukit Chandu on 14 February, the day before the fall of Singapore, though, that the comparatively young Royal Malay Regiment is remembered for inflicting heavy losses on the Japanese while fighting, literally, to the last man.<sup>6</sup> Years later, when Britain’s Major-General Bruce, who raised the first Malay Regiment in the 1930s, arrived in Malaya for the Merdeka (Independence) celebrations on 31 August 1957, he recalled the exceptional discipline and courage of the Malay officers and, in particular, ‘heroic Adnan’ (Lieutenant Adnan Saidi of Selangor).<sup>7</sup>



National Monument of Malaysia.



Excerpt taken with permission from 'Penang's Story, My Story' by Datuk Seri Wong Chun Wai, CEO, Star Media Group Berhad.

The Australian air base in Butterworth certainly left an impact on many Penangites because they became very much a part of the local community.

Their story began in 1957 when the Royal Air Force, which was part of the British defence plan, closed the base in Butterworth and transferred ownership to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

The RAAF stationed numerous Australian fighters and bomber squadrons there.

These planes were to play a crucial, but supportive role during the Emergency as well as the Confrontation with Indonesia.

It was reported that in 1964, its Sabre jets responded to Indonesian jet fighters heading towards Malaysian airspace but the latter turned back before crossing the international air space. The RAAF personnel were generally well-behaved, unlike the rowdier American marines, who also dropped by Penang as part of their rest and recreation entitlement back in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Australians, when they were off duty, could be seen in George Town, wearing their trademark shorts and stockings which were pulled up to their knees.

Their favourite eating spot was the Eden Restaurant in Hutton Lane, which served western set meals at reasonable prices, while their watering hole was the Hong Kong Bar in Chulia Street, which was something of an institution in Penang until the RAAF closed its base in 1988. The servicemen would leave pictures, badges, mementoes and plaques as a reminder of their days at the bar.

For Australian families who had just arrived in Penang, the RAAF Club was their oasis. Temporary accommodation would be provided to these new arrivals until they found their homes in Fettes Park, Tanjung Tokong and Tanjung Bungah—these were their three favourite spots although the base was on the other side of the channel.

Their social lives revolved around the RAAF Club—where sporting and social events were held. It was open only to RAAF personnel and Malaysians working with them. These Australians left behind many friends among Penangites.

Lucky for us Penangites, we had Radio RAAF. As a music loving teenager I was introduced to the world of Australian bands such as Little River Band, Sherbet, INXS, Men at Work and of course, John Paul Young. The announcers were mostly family members of the Australian servicemen. To this day I can still recall the call sign for each programme that simply began with, “This is the Radio R, double A, F..” The Radio RAAF played *Everytime You Go Away* as its farewell song, before signing off for good.

With its thriving port, Penangites had long been exposed to foreign presence, but to have Australians in the neighbourhood emphasised how cosmopolitan the state was in the early years.

Maybe the relationship between Penang and Australia was fated in some ways. After all, Captain Francis Light founded Penang while his son, William Light, founded Adelaide.



Radio RAAF.



### *The Death Marches of Sabah*

The Australian War Memorial estimates that 70 per cent of the number of Australians taken prisoner during the Pacific War—15 395—were captured during the Malayan Campaign.<sup>8</sup> First held at Singapore's Changi prison, these prisoners of war (POWs) were then deployed around Southeast Asia in working parties. Three of the main camps were at Sandakan, Labuan and Jesselton (now Kota Kinabalu) in Sabah. In Sandakan, 2434 POWs—1793 Australians and 641 British—were forced to build an airstrip.<sup>9</sup> In January 1945, they were sent on the infamous 'death marches' from Sandakan to Ranau, 240 kilometres across Sabah's rugged interior. When the Pacific War officially ended on 14 August 1945, only six of the POWs, all Australian, were still alive.<sup>10</sup>

## AUSTRALIAN, BRITISH, INDIAN AND MALAY SOLDIERS WERE INVOLVED IN THE CAMPAIGN'S FINAL STRUGGLE

During the Sandakan–Ranau ordeal, the Australian POWs were not alone. They were covertly assisted by local Sabahans. Food was left at prison camp fences, letters were smuggled out and items such as radio parts smuggled into the camps. When escapees were encountered, the Sabahans hid them in their homes or found *perahus* (boats) to take them across to Berhala Island or even, they hoped, as far as the Philippines. This support attracted real danger to the Sabahans' own lives. Their courage, and that of the Australian POWs who suffered so terribly, is kept alive through the efforts of Malaysians and Australians, such as Datuk Irene Charuruks OAM of the Sabah Tourism Board, Catherin Chua AM of the Sandakan Municipal Council, and Australian military historian Lynette Ramsay Silver OAM.

## Route of the Death Marches







SANDAKAN  
MEMORIAL

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL THOSE  
WHO SUFFERED AND DIED HERE  
DURING THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION





Australian Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove  
at the Sandakan Memorial Park, 15 August 2015.



Catherin Chua, AM  
Senior Personal Assistant  
to the President  
Sandakan Municipal Council



Sandakan Day Memorial is a special day commemorating and honouring more than 2400 Australian and British POWs who suffered, and made the ultimate sacrifice, on the infamous Sandakan-Ranau Death Marches during World War II. Only six Australians escaped and lived to tell of the atrocities they went through. Sandakan Day is also a tribute to local civilians and a group of 19 Chinese community leaders who were beheaded and buried in a mass grave on 27 May 1945.

On 27 May 2003 the first Sandakan Day Memorial was held on the actual camp site of the POWs. In 2004, it was decided that the memorial would be held every August 15, the day the war ended, and also the day the last POW in Sandakan died.

I assisted in the preparations for the first Sandakan Day Memorial in 2003 and since 2005 have organised the event.

Over that time I have been privileged to meet many Sandakan POWs' relatives, Australian war veterans, and the families of the local heroes who attend each year. I also met four Sandakan POWs who survived because they were sent to the Kuching POW Camp. They were Bill Young, Robert Ellice Flint, Russ Ewin and Leslie Bunny Glover, all of whom have attended the Sandakan Day Memorial Service.

In April 2007, the Office of Australian War Graves organised the first ANZAC Day Dawn Service in Sandakan and I was privileged to assist in bringing this about. To date, the highest turnout for the Sandakan Day Memorial service was 700 in 2010, and at the Sandakan ANZAC Day Dawn Service in 2015, more than 600 attended.

Throughout these services, and my attendance at ten Sandakan Memorials throughout Australia, I have not only made many friends, I have acquired an 'Australian family', and I am proud whenever I am fondly referred to as their 'Borneo sister'. I have felt the grief and sadness of Australians visiting Sandakan and will always treasure these unforgettable experiences with them. I hope the Sandakan story will always be preserved through both the annual Sandakan Day Memorial and Sandakan ANZAC Day Dawn Services.



Australian Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove with recipients of the Order of Australia based in Malaysia, August 2015.



**Datuk Andrew Sim Men Kin,  
JP AM  
Honorary Consul of  
Australia in Kota Kinabalu**

Australian Governor General Sir Peter  
Cosgrove with Honorary Consul to Sabah,  
Datuk Andrew Sim at Sandakan, 2015.



The close relationship between Sabah and Australia goes beyond the 60th Anniversary of the Australian High Commission in Malaysia. Many Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen lost their lives fighting the Japanese in North Borneo (as Sabah was then known) during World War II. Records say that up to 1700 servicemen perished on the infamous Sandakan Death March alone, the single worst atrocity suffered by Australians throughout the war. It happened in January 1945, when the Japanese army decided to move 1900 Australian Prisoners of War (POWs) captured following the fall of Singapore in 1942. Following the bombing of the Sandakan airstrip, an Allied landing was expected and the Australian POWs were marched from Sandakan to Ranau. Only six soldiers survived to tell their bitter tale of suffering at the hands of the Japanese.

A War Memorial was built in Kundasang, Ranau in 1962 to commemorate the fallen Australian soldiers in Sabah and every year, ANZAC Day is commemorated in Kota Kinabalu and Sandakan on April 24 and 25—the biggest ANZAC Memorial in Malaysia. A few hundred people come for the memorials every year. Ever since my appointment as Honorary Consul in 2004, I have maintained this yearly tradition in Kota Kinabalu to symbolise the friendship between Sabah and Australia. I want to create awareness among the people of Sabah about the contribution of the Australians there.

In addition to the ANZAC Day memorials, the Sandakan Memorial Day on August 15 each year also commemorates Australian soldiers who served and died in Sabah. The current servicemen from the Australian military also participate in the yearly memorials. The current Governor General of Australia Sir Peter Cosgrove attended the memorial services in Sandakan in August 2015 and the former Governor General of Australia, Quentin Bryce, visited Sandakan in 2010. There is now a direct flight twice a week connecting Kota Kinabalu and Perth, and many Sabahans are Australian graduates. We have a special relationship which I hope more people will come to share.

## Testing Peace: A Partnership Reinforced

### *The Malayan Emergency*

The Cold War in Asia meant that an enduring peace in Malaya remained elusive. Only three years after the end of the Japanese occupation of Malaya, the Malayan Emergency was declared in June 1948.

Australia and other allies recognised that Malaya's central geostrategic location in the region was both an asset and a vulnerability. The suppression of the communist insurgents was therefore seen as a regional responsibility. In August 1949, a unified Commonwealth defence planning coalition between Australia, New Zealand and Britain for the protection of the Malaya region, known as ANZAM, was formed. Australia's commitment to ANZAM brought with it a sharpened sense of place in Southeast Asia and a policy of concentrating defence efforts in its neighbourhood.<sup>11</sup> In December 1949, ANZAM became operational with the realisation 'that the fates of South-East Asia and Australia are linked'.<sup>12</sup> The following year, Australia's Minister for External Affairs Percy Spender would tell Parliament that Malaya, in particular, was of 'supreme importance' in this equation.<sup>13</sup>

## THE SUPPRESSION OF THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS WAS SEEN AS A REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

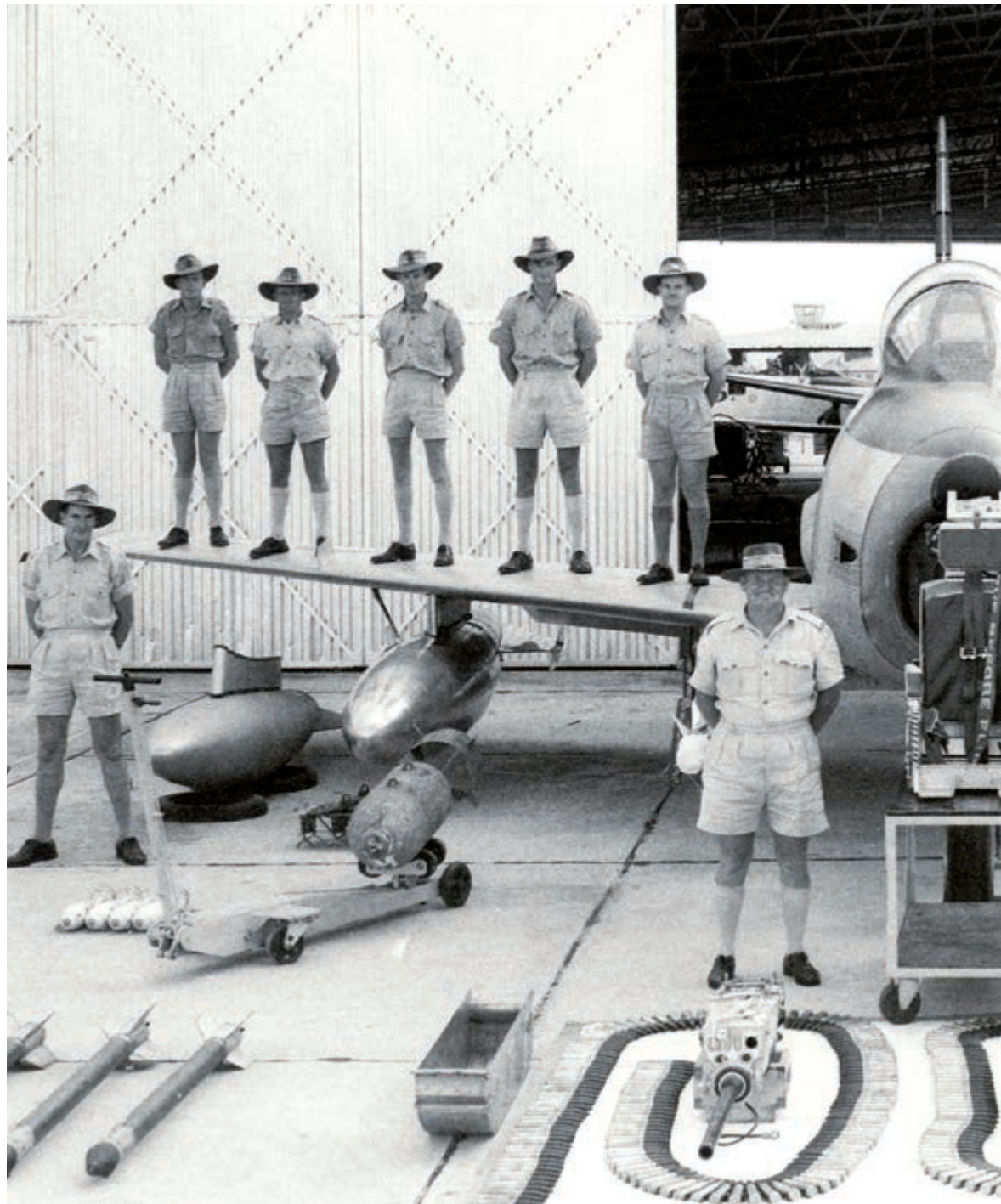
Australia's commitment to the Emergency began in May 1950 when Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced Australia's first ever peacetime deployment—a squadron of Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Dakota transport aircraft and a squadron of Lincoln heavy bombers to Malaya.<sup>14</sup> Under the Commonwealth (Far East) Strategic Reserve (CSR/FESR) announced in April 1955, this commitment quickly expanded. Between August and October 1955, an RAAF airfield construction squadron began work on extending and reconstructing the airstrips at Penang's Butterworth



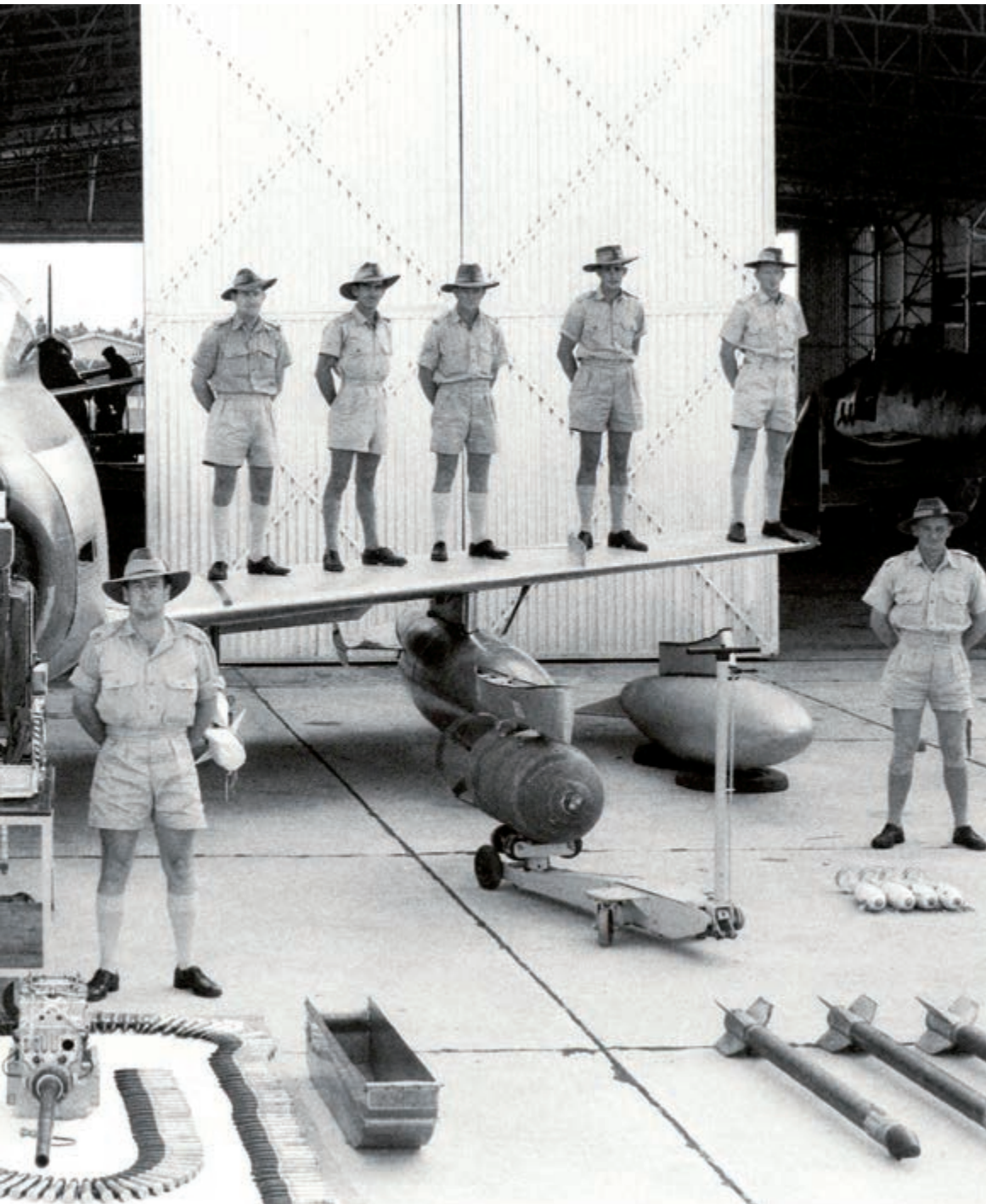


Australian Minister for Army, Jim Forbes, and Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, 1965.

airbase in preparation for the fighter and bomber squadrons to follow.<sup>15</sup> An Army battalion was also deployed to Penang, and two Royal Australian Navy destroyers already serving in the area became the naval element of the commitment. The full complement of Australian Military Forces—navy, army and air—remained in Malaya until 1963. After that, an Australian battalion group served on rotation with the CSR in Malaysia until the beginning of 1970, when it moved to Singapore.<sup>16</sup>







Royal Australian Air Force  
personnel at Butterworth, 1960.



### *Confrontation*

In September 1963, the Federation of Malaysia was born, bringing Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah together as one nation.<sup>17</sup> *The Herald* in Melbourne announced that the ‘Malaysia flag flies’ in Kuala Lumpur, describing coloured lights twinkling and fireworks flashing in celebration.<sup>18</sup> In a less optimistic tone, the report went on to say that a shadow had fallen over the celebrations as neighbours Indonesia and the Philippines objected to the new federation, claiming Britain’s disposal of its former colonies in this way was ‘neo-colonialism’.<sup>19</sup> Indonesia’s President Sukarno refused to recognise Malaysia and committed Indonesia to a *Ganyang Malaysia* (Crush Malaysia) campaign.<sup>20</sup> From the outset Australia supported the new federation, accepting the risk that this would influence its other relationships in the region. The Australian Government consequently determined to direct its efforts to finding a diplomatic, rather than defence, resolution to what became known as *Konfrontasi*.<sup>21</sup>

In 1964 however, in the face of increased threats of sabotage in Singapore and Malaysia, the Australian Government agreed to a Malaysian request to use Australian forces with the CSR against Indonesian-trained infiltrators on the Malayan mainland.<sup>22</sup> With the threat escalating, Australia subsequently agreed to Malaysia’s request to deploy Australian forces to the Borneo territories in January 1965, while continuing also to seek a political settlement. Following a period of unpredictability, and some military engagement, the dispute was eventually resolved and terms for settlement reached in May 1966.<sup>23</sup> In recognition of Australia’s commitment throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the Malaysian Government issued a commemorative medal, the Pingat Jasa Malaysia, in 2004.<sup>24</sup> In January 2006 the first awards were received by the Governor-General Major General Michael Jeffrey AC CVO (Ret’d)<sup>25</sup> and the Chief of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AC AFC.



FPDA Defence Ministers receive a briefing at the Combined Joint Operations Centre in Singapore, 2011.

## New Defence Arrangements for a New Era

The 1970s brought new synergies in the Australia–Malaysia defence partnership based on changing regional dynamics. The ownership of the British airbase at Butterworth, which ‘for almost all practical purposes’ had been an Australian base since 1958 under AMDA, was returned to Malaysia in 1970.<sup>26</sup> The base, however, remained under Australian command until June 1988.<sup>27</sup> At a ceremony farewelling the RAAF 79th Squadron, the Australian and Malaysian Defence Ministers locked hands in ‘a symbol of unity and co-operation’, reaffirming their commitment to the FPDA and its Integrated Air Defence System (IADS).<sup>28</sup> Although Butterworth has been under Malaysian command since 1988 and Australian strike aircraft are no longer based there, it remains pivotal to Australia’s regional defence and the ADF continues to conduct joint military exercises, maritime surveillance operations and humanitarian assistance missions from it. As pledged in 1988, this ongoing cooperation is underpinned by the FPDA.





The FPDA (Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom) replaced the ANZAM and AMDA agreements in 1971 after Britain withdrew its military capability from Southeast Asia. The arrangements put in place a framework for cooperation that retains its importance as the only collective security arrangement in Southeast Asia.<sup>29</sup> In 2011, on the 40th anniversary of the FPDA, BERSAMA

Royal Australian Navy officers working with their Malaysian counterparts on a community engagement activity in Malaysia, 2011.



LIMA joint exercises were introduced with the aim ‘to enhance the interoperability of the combined air, ground and naval forces of the FPDA countries.’ In 2012 Exercise BERSAMA SHIELD was initiated to promote ‘a shared understanding of procedures for air and maritime operations, the protection of the marine environment and disaster relief management.’<sup>30</sup> BERSAMA LIMA and BERSAMA SHIELD are now annual joint exercises and there are eight ADF members posted to the FPDA’s IADS Headquarters at the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) base, Butterworth. This includes the Commander, an Australian Air Vice-Marshal. Far from being a Cold War anachronism, the FPDA is ‘particularly well-suited to the likely future strategic circumstances’ both countries face in the region.<sup>31</sup>

Australia and Malaysia participate regularly in other bilateral and multilateral exercises, such as the Army’s annual SOUTHERN TIGER and HARINGAROO exercises, the Navy’s MASTEX exercises, the Air Force’s PITCH BLACK exercises, and the United States–Thailand COBRA GOLD military exercises that take place with other regional partners. Also serving the bilateral partnership since 1992 is the Malaysia–Australia Joint Defence Program (MAJDP) aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the bilateral defence relationship. Under the MAJDP, reciprocal arrangements provide ADF officers with the opportunity to undertake long-term attachments with the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF), while similar numbers of MAF officers are attached to ADF Units. Significant numbers of MAF personnel also undertake courses at the major military training institutions in Australia,<sup>32</sup> while ADF officers attend the MAF Staff College, Maktab Turus Angkatan Tentera.



Headquarters Integrated Area Defence System staff and officers from the Royal Singapore Airforce, Royal Australian Airforce, and Royal Malaysian Airforce consider air asset logistics for Exercise BERSAMA SHIELD at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth, 2014.



Australian Federal Police and Royal Malaysian Army personnel on a joint patrol in Timor-Leste, 2006.

## A Brave New World: Meeting New Security Challenges

In the twenty-first century, the Southeast Asia region has developed new networks of cooperation to meet new challenges. Australia and Malaysia are actively involved in many regional partnerships and forums committed to preserving the security and prosperity of the region and to strengthening global norms and upholding universally-recognised principles. Both are active champions of the East Asia Summit (EAS), now the pre-eminent leaders' forum for dialogue on strategic, political and economic issues. Both work closely in the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meetings Plus (ADMM-Plus), and have long done so in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as well as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum launched in 1989. This firm commitment to a range of processes signifies an increasingly aligned strategic outlook, including the increasing importance of regional architecture for promoting strategic trust and managing inter-state relations in the region.

## AUSTRALIA AND MALAYSIA ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN MANY REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND FORUMS

In 2014, ASEAN and Australia entered a Strategic Partnership, in recognition of the depth and breadth of Australia–ASEAN cooperation over many years and acknowledging the potential for still greater mutual engagement. Leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in the maintenance of regional peace, security and stability, including through deepening ASEAN–Australia consultations, and to work closely to strengthen the EAS.

The ADDM-Plus has opened the way to more avenues for defence cooperation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners. Within the ADMM-Plus, six Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) have been established, one of which is the Maritime Security EWG, co-chaired by Australia and Malaysia

from 2011 to 2014. In 2012, the first maritime security table top exercises were carried out, and for the first time in 2013, joint practical exercises in humanitarian and disaster relief, military medicine, counter-terrorism and maritime security were extended to all ADMM-Plus members.

As well as these multilateral activities, several bilateral arrangements have been put in place to manage non-traditional security threats. The new century began with an increased focus on new and dangerous forms of terrorism. Australia and Malaysia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism in 2002, to build on 'the existing strong cooperation between Australian agencies and their Malaysian counterparts'.<sup>33</sup> This was followed by the conclusion of a Maritime Security MOU in 2011 and an MOU on Combatting Transnational Crime in December 2014. Australia and Malaysia are jointly committed to confronting the threat of terrorism, specifically the challenge of returning foreign terrorist fighters.

### *Policing partnerships*

An MOU on Combating Transnational Crime and Developing Police Cooperation was signed in 2009, but our policing cooperation has a much longer history. Australia's first international policing liaison positions were established in Malaysia in 1973. At that time, a primary reason for a presence in Malaysia was to counter the growing international drug problem. The role subsequently expanded to include all forms of transnational crime, including people smuggling, human trafficking, terrorism, fraud and money laundering. Over the next four decades, as the sharing of criminal intelligence across borders continued, cooperation expanded into enhancing interoperability, capabilities, and the coordination of efforts to form an international policing regime.

Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Scott Morrison, touring people smuggling hot spots off the coast of Malaysia with officials from the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, February 2014.







Today, Australia and Malaysia work closely with the region on a range of increasingly complex challenges. For example, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) conduct a range of investigations and prosecutions courses and bilateral working groups designed to foster mutual understanding and the interoperability of police and other agencies in the region in preventing, detecting, and investigating transnational crime. Joint AFP–Royal Malaysian Police activities have led to the successful prosecution of drug trafficking and people smuggling syndicates operating between our two countries.

Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Peter Dutton, on board a boat gifted by Australia to the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency as part of the joint efforts to combat people smuggling and transnational crime on the high seas.



Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak at a press conference on MH370 and MH17, September 2014.

### *The MH370 and MH17 disasters*

The Australia–Malaysia partnership entered unprecedented territory in 2014. On 8 March, Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 left Kuala Lumpur, bound for Beijing, with 239 passengers on board. The flight did not reach its destination and the search continues for its recovery. RAAF P3s were among the first aircraft to join the search, and when the Indian Ocean was identified as the likely location of the lost aircraft, Australia accepted Malaysia's request to lead the search effort. A Joint Agency Coordination Centre (JACC) was established





for the purpose and continues to coordinate the largest and most complex search in aviation history.<sup>34</sup> With the support of agencies including Australia's Transport Safety Bureau, Maritime Safety Authority, Geoscience Australia and the AFP, the JACC also facilitates international cooperation on the search effort. Malaysian experts participate in the day-to-day work of the JACC. Touring the MH370 search coordination centre at RAAF Base Pearce in April 2014, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak thanked the





26 nations providing assistance and singled out Australia for its efforts in coordinating the search, describing it as a ‘good friend’.<sup>35</sup>

A second disaster struck Malaysia Airlines on 17 July 2014 when flight MH17 carrying 298 passengers and crew—including 193 citizens from The Netherlands, 43 Malaysians and 38 who called Australia home—was shot down over eastern Ukraine en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur.<sup>36</sup>

Royal Australian Navy ships  
in search of missing Malaysia  
Airlines Flight MH370, 2014.



Chief of the Australian Defence Force, General David Hurley, thanks the Royal Malaysian Air Force personnel for their effort in the search for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, 2014.

The incident, described as a ‘criminal act’, prompted global outrage and Australia, then a member of the UN Security Council (UNSC), immediately sought its support for a full, independent international investigation. This was achieved with the unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 2166, which called on all States to cooperate fully with crash recovery, retrieval and investigative efforts. The Australian Government committed a substantial team of DFAT, AFP, ADF and Australian Transport Safety Bureau investigators to the undertaking.<sup>37</sup> Australia and Malaysia are both members of the Dutch-led team investigating the cause of the aircraft’s downing, and both governments are committed to work together to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The MH370 and MH17 disasters have demonstrated that decades of close collaboration between Australia and Malaysia born of friendship can be mobilised purposefully when new challenges emerge. From 1955 to 2015, this spirit of partnership has come to symbolise our defence and security relationship. Over 60 years, that relationship has matured into one of mutual respect and trust, underpinned by a framework of cooperation that is in place to endure into the future.



**Air Chief Marshal  
Sir Angus Houston AK,  
AFC (Ret'd)**

The Chief of the Australian Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston receiving the Pingat Jasa Malaysia on behalf of the Australian Defence Force, 2006.



I visited Malaysia in 1972 and 1974 as a young Air Force Officer and on both occasions enjoyed a leave break in Penang. In 1975-76 I flew with three delightful Malaysians who I instructed on the RAAF Pilots Course at Pearce in Western Australia.

After participating in significant defence engagement with Malaysia in the mid-1990s, I was very fortunate to be appointed Commander Integrated Air Defence System (IADS) in 1999. Living in Penang and working at Butterworth I was involved in all aspects of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA). There was a consensus for change and reform and I spent much of my time consulting in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore to develop and then produce a new policy framework for the FPDA. The policy known as Version 10 was endorsed by FPDA Ministers in 2000.



In my time as Chief of the Air Force and Chief of the Defence Force I was able to build on long-standing relationships and friendships which originated in the FPDA and in the bilateral military relationship. Accordingly, I maintained very constructive, trusting relationships with all the Malaysian Chiefs that I worked with to the betterment of our broader bilateral relationship. In particular, the support provided by Malaysia for our Asian Tsunami and P3 operations was outstanding. Similarly in 2006, after fighting broke out between elements of the military and the police in Timor-Leste, we were two of four countries which responded with military deployments working in coalition to assist the young nation successfully re-establish governance and law and order, thereby enhancing regional stability.

In more recent times I have been involved in the search for MH370 and the response to the shooting down of MH17. Again the long-standing relationship between our two countries has been enhanced at all levels at a time of considerable sorrow for both nations. The cooperation in all search activities in the Indian Ocean has been superb and the teamwork between the Australian Federal Police and the Royal Malaysian Police in Ukraine has also been excellent.

I have been privileged to have been involved in this wonderful Australia–Malaysia relationship for over 40 years in a wide variety of different roles. In my experience it has been mutually beneficial for both nations and is characterised at the personal level by deep friendships, constructive cooperation and significant achievement.

## CHAPTER 2



### Advancing the Economic Relationship

Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb with  
Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry  
Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, 2015.

Malaysia has long been an important trading partner for Australia. In 1934, Malaya was one of the seven countries visited by Australia's first diplomatic trade mission to Asia—the 'Goodwill Mission'. Since that time, Australia–Malaysia trade has been transformed from an exchange of mostly raw materials to a thriving and increasingly complex relationship. Following World War II, Malaysia was one of the first Asian countries with which Australia formalised trade arrangements. Our first bilateral trade agreement was signed in 1958, and then revised in 1974. In 2013 the Australia–Malaysia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA) entered into force, further strengthening our trade and investment relationship.

## MALAYA WAS VISITED BY AUSTRALIA'S FIRST DIPLOMATIC TRADE MISSION TO ASIA— THE 'GOODWILL MISSION'

When Australia's first diplomatic mission was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1955, goods exports to Malaya amounted to a modest A£9.3 million—approximately A\$300 million today.<sup>1</sup> In 2013–14, the total value of Australian exports of goods and services to Malaysia was A\$7.2 billion which brings our six decades of trade dynamism into clearer focus.<sup>2</sup> In the past decade, two-way goods and services trade has doubled and diversified such that, in 2014, it was valued at around A\$21 billion.<sup>3</sup> Malaysia and Australia now feature among each other's top 10 trading partners and investment flows are becoming increasingly important. Malaysia in 2014 was among the largest regional investors in the Australian economy, with total investment of A\$21 billion. Though Australia's investment in Asia has traditionally been more modest, at A\$9.6 billion, Malaysia is nonetheless a significant destination for Australian investment in Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup>



## Historic Synergies: Tin and Rubber

### *A nascent trade relationship*

When Australia entered its first phase of nation building after federation in 1901, its trade ties with Asia were in their infancy, having been mediated through Britain during the colonial era. In 1906, the State of Victoria's Department of Agriculture appointed Australia's first trade delegate to Southeast Asia, James Sinclair.<sup>5</sup> From his base in Singapore, Sinclair travelled throughout the region and became well acquainted with Malaya's vast sugar, tapioca, coconut and rubber plantations. Sinclair had some success in selling Victoria's ploughs and cultivators and was encouraged that 'if they do well, a large business will follow.'<sup>6</sup> Sinclair's efforts did, indeed, increase the volume of trade with the region, and although he was not replaced when retiring in 1912, other Australian states soon emulated his model in the region.

The first decades of the twentieth century were marked not only by Australia's desire to establish new export markets, but also by a voracious appetite for raw materials to feed its manufacturing industries. Malaya became an important tin and rubber supplier, supporting the young industrialising economy. In the five years from 1906 to 1910, Australia's imports of tin from the Straits Settlements (Malay states of Penang, Singapore and Malacca), together with those from Labuan, doubled and rubber imports increased more than tenfold. These commodities fuelled the success of some of Australia's earliest and most iconic companies and, over the next fifty years, rubber and tin created new synergies across our two economies.

### *Malaya and the birth of Australian commercial icons*

Australian investment in Malayan tin began before federation with entrepreneurs such as Sir Henry Jones, the founder of IXL Prospecting Company, investing in Malayan mines in the late 1890s.<sup>7</sup> Co-investor in IXL and later chairman, Achalen Woolliscroft Palfreyman, went on to co-found Austral Malay Tin Limited in 1911, establishing offices in Taiping, Rawang

and Kuala Lumpur. Palfreyman pioneered bucket dredging technology in Malaya with his company Consolidated Tin Dredging which, through several incarnations and mergers, eventually became CSR Limited, one of Australia's largest building supply corporations.<sup>8</sup>

## FOLLOWING MALAYA'S INDEPENDENCE, THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN KUALA LUMPUR TURNED ITS ATTENTION TOWARDS NURTURING AND STRENGTHENING AUSTRALIA–MALAYA TRADE

After World War II rubber became as important to Australia as tin had been post-federation. Rubber was required in the foundation of Australia's postwar industry. When Australia's first Commission was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1955-56, imports from Malaya amounted to A£16.2 million—almost twice the value of Australian exports to Malaya—and rubber accounted for A£13.4 million of this amount.<sup>9</sup> By the end of 1951, General Motors Holden (GMH) had manufactured just 50 000 cars in Australia but, by 1953, this number had doubled to 100 000, and more than doubled again to 250 000 by 1956. In 1956 GMH started exporting to Malaya and Sabah and, in 1957, the first Australian-made Chrysler Royal went to Malaya—a popular choice in the newly independent nation, given Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman's own preference for a Chrysler Imperial.<sup>10</sup>

### Repositioning our Economic Partnership

Following Malaya's independence, the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur turned its attention towards nurturing and strengthening Australia–Malaya trade. In April 1958, a trade delegation of 20 Australian businessmen, led by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Trade Minister, Reginald Schwartz, visited Malaya, Singapore and Thailand. After the visit, High Commissioner

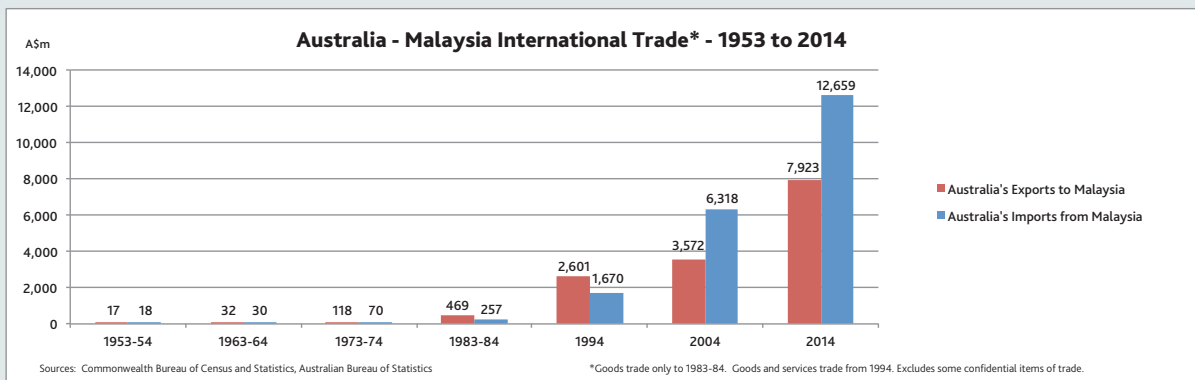
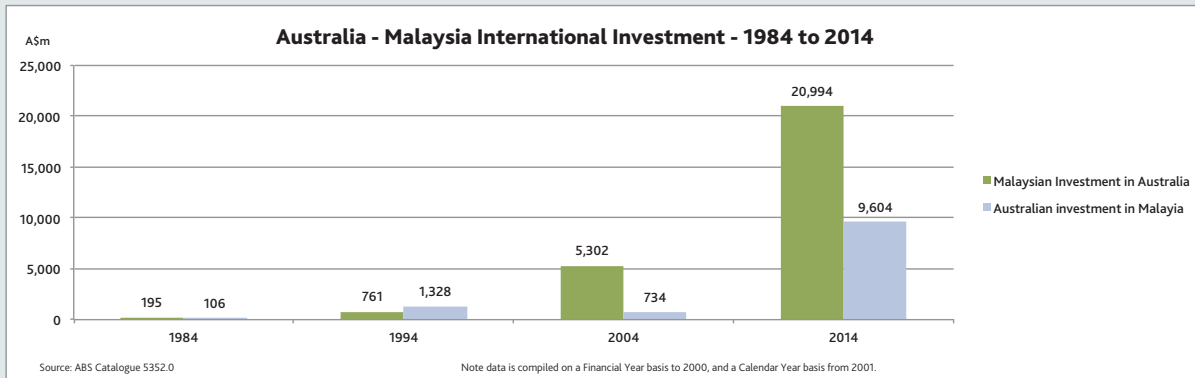
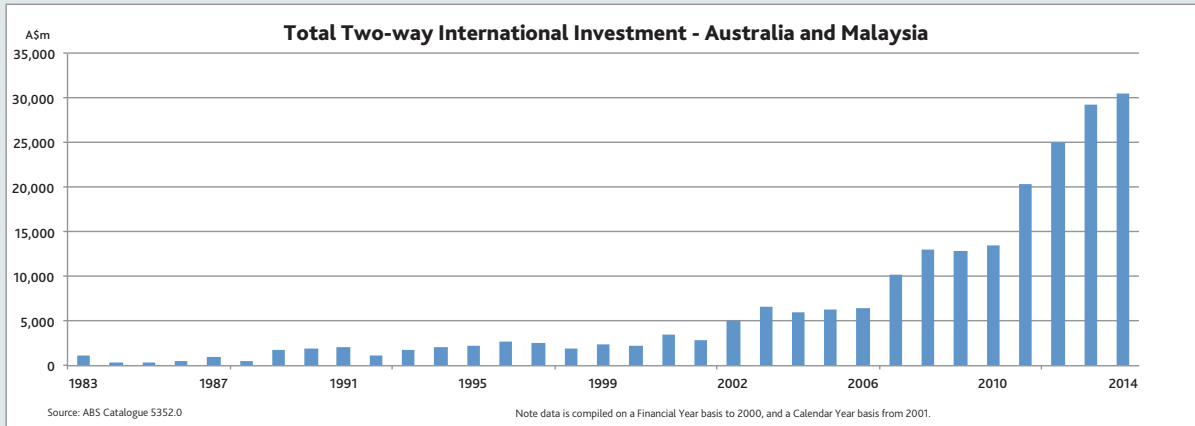


W.G. Burns, Senior Trade Commissioner, Kuala Lumpur, (second from left) assisting at the Kuala Lumpur Materials Handling Display, 1973.

Tom Critchley announced that trade talks would commence and that he was confident they would lead to ‘stronger ties between the two countries.’<sup>11</sup> Australian exports to Malaysia then grew at a healthy pace.<sup>12</sup> By the time Critchley left Malaysia in 1965, Australia’s exports had doubled to A\$49.8 million—around A\$600 million today. More striking was that the trade balance had started to shift and, in 1965, Australia’s imports from Malaysia had risen to A\$31.9 million.<sup>13</sup>

Growth in the Australia–Malaysia economic relationship was spurred by new approaches to policy and long-term planning. In 1971, Malaysia launched a New Economic Policy (NEP), putting in place a 20-year plan intended to end poverty and transform the traditional tin and rubber economy into an export-oriented economy around manufactured goods.<sup>14</sup> Australia also revised its economic policies, reorienting its trade focus to the Asia region.<sup>15</sup> Trade agreements made with neighbouring countries in the 1950s and 1960s were refreshed, largely with a view to reducing tariffs. Throughout the 1980s and





# AUSTRALIA'S TRADE AND INVESTMENT WITH MALAYSIA IN 2014

## TOP 5 EXPORTS TO MALAYSIA

- 1 Confidential items of trade\* – \$1.3b
- 2 Copper – \$794m
- 3 Education-related travel – \$720m
- 4 Nickel\*\* – \$606m
- 5 Personal travel excluding education – \$533m

## AUSTRALIA-MALAYSIA TRADE

- > TOTAL EXPORTS<sup>†</sup> – \$7.9b
- > TOTAL IMPORTS<sup>^</sup> – \$12.7b
- > TOTAL TWO-WAY TRADE<sup>†</sup> – \$20.6b
- > SHARE OF AUSTRALIA'S TOTAL TRADE – 3.1%

## TOP 5 IMPORTS FROM MALAYSIA

- 1 Crude petroleum – \$4.7b
- 2 Refined petroleum – \$908m
- 3 Transport services – \$650m
- 4 Monitors, projectors & TVs – \$464m
- 5 Personal travel excluding education – \$442m

## AUSTRALIA-MALAYSIA INVESTMENT

- > Australia's investment (stock) in Malaysia: \$9.6b
- > Malaysia was the **21st largest** destination for Australian investment (stock) abroad in 2014
- > Malaysia's investment (stock) in Australia: \$21.0b
- > Malaysia was the **17th largest** source of investment (stock) in Australia in 2014

\* Includes crude petroleum and other items classified as confidential by the ABS

\*\* Excludes nickel, unworked

† Excludes nickel unworked and other items classified as country confidential by the ABS

^ Includes unpublished ABS data

Data is the most recent available at the time of publishing and is based on ABS data

1990s, despite periods of diplomatic friction, the bilateral trade relationship continued to develop so that, by 1993–94, Malaysia was Australia's 11th largest export market and around 300 Australian companies had a presence in Malaysia.<sup>16</sup> The growth was given impetus by the establishment of the Malaysia Australia Business Council (MABC) in 1986 and the Australia Malaysia Business Council (AMBC) in 1987. The MABC and AMBC continue to support our respective business communities in promoting trade and 'good relations between Australia and Malaysia by providing an avenue for contact and communication between business people'.<sup>17</sup>

## New Economic Frameworks for an Asian Century

### *Economic regionalism*

As members of the Commonwealth, Britain's move to the European Economic Community (later European Union) in the early 1970s and the eroding of Commonwealth tariff preferences impacted both Australia and Malaysia. Australia was particularly affected and the event saw the notion of a free trade area for Australia and Asia raised as early as 1972.<sup>18</sup> But it was not until 1989 that Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke launched an audacious plan for an Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and tasked the then Secretary of DFAT, Richard Woolcott, to consult widely across the region on the proposal. The vision for APEC was to facilitate economic growth and prosperity by creating a seamless regional economy through trade and investment liberalisation, business facilitation, and economic and technical cooperation. Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad did not support the idea initially and instructed Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz to consult on an alternative East Asian Economic Group (EAEG) that would include ASEAN member states, plus Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea.



Ultimately, regional support coalesced around a grouping with wider membership that encompassed the then-six ASEAN members, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. APEC has now grown to 21 members and accounts for 48 per cent of world trade.<sup>19</sup> After the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–98, however, the idea for an East Asian grouping was revived, consolidating around a newly-formed ASEAN-Plus Three (China, Japan and South Korea). This was followed by the launch in Kuala Lumpur of the East Asia Summit in 2005, bringing in Australia, New Zealand and India (the United States and Russia joined later in 2012). These two forums, APEC and the EAS, in which Australia and Malaysia have played productive roles, were outcomes of a new era of regionalism and today play central roles in regional economic and security cooperation.

Malaysia and Australia are also part of the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) which entered into force in January 2010. It sits among Australia’s largest, and most ambitious, trade arrangements. It is also ASEAN’s first comprehensive FTA covering goods, services, investment and other issues including intellectual property, electronic commerce and competition.<sup>20</sup> AANZFTA’s reach is extensive—across a combined population of 649 million people and a combined GDP of US\$4.2 trillion.<sup>21</sup> The conclusion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) negotiations in October 2015 provides further opportunities to Malaysian and Australian businesses across the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region. The TPP builds upon the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (2006) that consists of Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore. There are currently 12 parties involved in the TPP which, as well as the four originating members, include Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, the United States and Vietnam. Reflecting our continued shared commitment to pursuing further regional trade liberalisation and integration, Malaysia and Australia are also parties to negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic



Australian Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb (centre) with Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato’ Sri Mustapa Mohamed (second from left) at a Trans-Pacific Partnership Ministerial Meeting press conference in Sydney, 2014.



TPP Ministers at the conclusion of Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement negotiations, October 2015.

Australian Minister for Trade and Competitiveness Craig Emerson signing Malaysia-Australia Free Trade Agreement side-letters with Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, 2012.



Partnership (RCEP).<sup>22</sup> The RCEP is an ASEAN initiative that proposes an FTA comprising all ten ASEAN nations, plus their current FTA partners, which include Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea and New Zealand.

#### *MAFTA: New bilateral impetus*

Our shared involvement in these multilateral regional efforts, however, did not see our bilateral trade relationship neglected and, on 1 January 2013, the Malaysia–Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA) entered into force. Building on the market access provisions of AANZFTA, MAFTA guarantees tariff-free entry for 97.6 per cent of current Australian goods exports to Malaysia, rising to 99 per cent by 2017, while Malaysian exports benefit from comprehensive duty-free entry into Australia.<sup>23</sup> This trade stimulus is supported by important institutional alignments. Our banking and judicial systems share similarities, while some Malaysian regulatory frameworks, such as the Malaysian Securities Commission, are modelled in part on the Australian system. These synergies open the services sector up



**Tunku Dato' Seri  
Shahabuddin Tunku  
Besar Burhanuddin,  
AO, Honorary Life  
Chairman, Malaysia  
Australia Business  
Council**

The Malaysia Australia Business Council (MABC) began in 1986. It was a great honour to be the founding Chairman and to remain as Chairman for almost 20 years. Today, in my role as Honorary Life Chairman of the MABC, I am very fortunate to continue my close association with Australia.

My relationship with the Australian High Commission, however, pre-dates my involvement with the MABC. In 1955, just before I left Malaysia to attend university abroad, I was fortunate to meet Thomas Critchley and experience his enthusiasm for the potential of Australia-Malaysia bilateral relations. Long after he left Malaysia Thomas Critchley remained a close friend of many Malaysian business and government leaders and his spirit of friendship has endured. This chance meeting with Australia's first High Commissioner to Malaysia certainly foreshadowed what was to become an important part of my future business and personal life.

Throughout the years my role with the MABC has afforded me a very intimate view of numerous developments, opportunities and challenges in the Australia-Malaysia relationship. I have witnessed the birth of many successful business ventures and I have seen a very rapid growth in two-way trade. However, while business and trade, security, tourism and education shape the essence of the formal ties, I believe that it is the personal friendships forged along the way that provide something 'extra special' that makes the bond so strong. The hand of friendship between Australians and Malaysians touches people of all ages across all walks of life.

It is testament to the strength of the Australia-Malaysia relationship that our inherent friendship has continued even during times of diplomatic tension. Indeed, it is very interesting to reflect that even during these slightly rocky periods the trade relationship between our two countries flourished. This illustrates that connections between Australia and Malaysia are forged on many levels and I am confident they will grow even stronger in the future.

I look forward to attending my 45th Melbourne Cup this year and to forming new friendships with Australian diplomatic representatives to Malaysia in the years ahead.





**Kee Wong**  
**Managing Director,**  
**e-Centric Innovations and**  
**former Australia–Malaysia**  
**Institute Board Member**

I first came to Australia in 1982 to study engineering at Monash University. When I first arrived, I had a clear intention of returning to Malaysia at the completion of my degree. After graduation, I continued with further studies and, 33 years on, I'm still in Australia. This unintended yet pleasant outcome resulted in my becoming an Australian (and a proud one at that) in 2004.

As the country of my birth, however, I will always have a connection with Malaysia. My parents and siblings are still living in my hometown, Penang, and I visit at least eight times a year to oversee my businesses in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Working across Asia for the last 25 years, as an executive of a multinational firm and as an Australian entrepreneur, has given me the opportunity to see relations between Australia and Malaysia from a unique perspective.

I was invited to join the Australia Malaysia Institute (AMI) Board in 2012. This was both a privilege and honour to be connected to the country of my birth in an official capacity. The role of the AMI is to foster and deepen people-to-people links between Australia and Malaysia across public and private institutions—something I can naturally ‘add value’ to and am passionate about. Being on the Board of AMI and Asialink, I am fortunate to have access to platforms for fostering relations between our countries. Bringing my experience, networks and most importantly my heritage, to these roles allows me to provide advice when required, bridge the cultural divide when necessary, and sell the complementary virtues and values of both countries.

Australia and Malaysia have many things in common. Both are small in terms of population, yet advanced economically. Both face the same challenges and opportunities of being surrounded by neighbours with large, young populations hungry for growth. With our alumni of over 400 000 Malaysians who have studied in Australia, there is no shortage of ‘ambassadors’ to tap into this opportunity to collaborate, and build on a history of good relations in the process.

I am fortunate to claim Australia and Malaysia as ‘my countries’ and will continue to foster relations in every way I can—it is a natural fit for me.



Economic Diplomacy in action  
– Australian High Commissioner  
Rod Smith addressing a business  
audience in Brisbane during a trade  
and investment roadshow, 2015.

to opportunities for greater collaboration. Leading the way in the financial services area has been the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ). ANZ entered the Malaysian market in 1971 and in 2007, purchased a 19.1 per cent interest in Malaysia's AmBank Group, now one of the largest financial institutions in Malaysia. Under MAFTA there is scope for further mutually beneficial partnerships to be forged in the financial services sector.

Another area of considerable collaboration is oil and gas. Malaysia is the second largest, and Australia the third largest, liquid natural gas (LNG) exporter in the world. While Australia has the region's largest gas reserves,

Malaysia is the fourth largest reserve holder.<sup>24</sup> Australian companies 'have learned to be innovative, nimble and highly efficient' in this lucrative sector and Malaysian and Australian entrepreneurs recognise the potential for collaboration. At the government-level, Austrade is working with Malaysia to build cooperation in this sector and, in 2014, convened a Global Oil and Gas Workforce Development Forum in Kuala Lumpur together with the Malaysian Oil and Gas Services Council (MOGSC) and Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP).<sup>25</sup> Such collaboration highlights the mutually beneficial potential to be found in the Australia–Malaysia partnership.

#### *Opportunities for future growth*

There are many areas that are ripe for future growth in the Australia–Malaysia bilateral trade relationship. These include financial services, the resources and agriculture sectors, and infrastructure development. But perhaps the most dynamic areas in this growth trajectory are currently found in the services sector, notably education and tourism. Education related travel is Australia's largest service export to Malaysia, amounting to around A\$720 million in 2014. On average, around 22 000 Malaysian students enrol to study in Australia each year, with another 12–15 000 studying on an Australian university campus in Malaysia. Recreational tourism follows close behind, adding just over A\$533 million to the Australian economy in 2014. These two thriving areas of exchange—tourism and education—are discussed in subsequent chapters.

## EDUCATION IS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST SERVICE EXPORT TO MALAYSIA, AMOUNTING TO AROUND A\$720 MILLION

For Malaysia, the bilateral relationship holds enormous potential in investment. There are already significant Malaysian interests in Australia, notably in the property–tourism nexus. In 2012 Malaysia's YTL Corporation Berhad—owner of some of Malaysia's most beautiful hotels and resorts—purchased three



Sid Myer, AM  
Chairman Asialink

My story of friendship with Malaysia is a deeply personal one, of two families—the Tan family in Malaysia and the Myer family in Melbourne—which has endured for over 40 years.

Business interests were the catalyst that brought us together in the mid-1970s. The Tan family from Malaysia was developing one of Singapore's first suburban shopping centres, the Parkway Centre. At the time, The Myer Emporium Ltd was seeking space in Asia for its first Asian Myer department store. Both strategies were far sighted. Although the opportunity for a business relationship was obvious, the partnership did not proceed—and this was due to the generosity of spirit shown by Dato' Tan Chin Nam, and his family.

Reflecting on the last 40 years, it is the close personal friendship between Dato' Tan Chin Nam and Bails Myer that is the enduring legacy both men have built, and continue to build today. That relationship now spans two generations, and was developed in both Malaysia and in Australia. For my part, the opportunity to work, and invest, with the Tan family enabled me and my family to live in Malaysia for almost five years in the 1990s. There we built a whole new set of personal friendships and business relationships that continue to this day, and are of much significance to my family.

Dato' Tan Chin Nam is good at making and keeping friends. He is a great friend of Australia. His relationship with Bart Cummings, who is legendary in horse racing circles, led to Dato' Tan winning four Melbourne Cups. So, while Australia and Malaysia's cooperative relationship is extensive—across defence, law enforcement and the recent airline tragedies—it is the power and significance of people-to-people relationships that remain at the heart of our engagement. The story of Dato' Tan Chin Nam and Bails Myer, and their families, is one such relationship.

It is my hope that in celebrating the 60 years of diplomatic engagement between the two countries, we recognise and celebrate many such people-to-people relationships.



Marriott hotels in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. The deluxe Hayman Island Resort is also owned by Malaysian company Mulpha. In 2015, more Malaysian-backed hotels will open their doors, with the boutique Mayfair Hotel in Adelaide being developed by the Adabaco Group and The Tank Stream Hotel in Sydney by IGB Corporation Berhad. As Malaysian investment in Australia's tourism sector increases, so too have Australian investors become increasingly engaged in Malaysia. Lend Lease, for example, is a key partner in the development of the A\$2.8 billion Tun Razak Exchange Lifestyle Quarter in central Kuala Lumpur. Lend Lease has been a part of many developments in Malaysia over the past 35 years, including the iconic Petronas Twin Towers and the state-of-the-art Pinewood Iskandar Malaysia Studios, a television and film production facility that opened in 2014.

The past 60 years have been truly dynamic for Australia–Malaysia trade and investment relations and demonstrate—from tin to television—the compatibility and vision in our many partnerships. Today, our capacities and our interests are closely aligned. From economic interactions that began over a century ago, when the spirit of entrepreneurship first animated the relationship, the frameworks for future cooperation have been moved into place. With continued growth across a range of sectors, both countries can look forward to a deepening and mutually beneficial economic engagement.

## CHAPTER 3



Australian teacher and PhD candidate Rebecca Cairns with students at SMK Tinggi Perempuan secondary school, Melaka, during the Malaysia Unplugged 2012 study tour.

## Education, Exchanges and Dialogue

Since the 1950s, an Australia–Malaysia education network has evolved far beyond that which any statistical data might convey. It is true that in 1957, the year of Malayan independence, around 1500 Malayan students were studying in Australian universities and colleges and that, almost 60 years later in 2014, there were over 22 000 international student enrolments from Malaysia in Australian higher education institutions.<sup>1</sup> This is a remarkable rate of growth, but it tells us little about the deeper ties that have developed behind those numbers. People-to-people links in their thousands span the decades, continue to flourish and be further extended into wider networks. The Australia–Malaysia alumni network now intersects across the academic, political, business, sporting, cultural and social sectors.

## OUR EDUCATION RELATIONSHIP IS NOW AS DIVERSE AS IT IS IMPORTANT TO BOTH COUNTRIES



Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Dr. Abdul Rahman Arshad and La Trobe University Pro-Vice-Chancellor Michael Osborne after signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the two universities in Kuala Lumpur, 1994.

This phenomenon is complemented by a rich seam of intellectual capital that has developed through research partnerships, technical capacity building and staff exchange programs, creating a web of scholars and friendships that intersect Australian and Malaysian universities. At the other end of the academic spectrum, primary and secondary schools in Australia champion cross-cultural education through Australia–Malaysia student and teacher exchange programs and the delivery of curriculum resources in both directions. Our education relationship is now as diverse as it is important to both countries, demonstrated by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Education in 2011 and an MOU on Higher Education in 2012 ‘to encourage and promote further links.’<sup>2</sup>



Above: Malayan Colombo Plan students, 1956.

Below: University of Adelaide and Colombo Plan students plan their tour of Singapore, Malaya, Thailand and Sarawak on the Colombo Plan Students Association of South Australia sponsored goodwill tour, 1962.





Three nurses from Malaya training with Australian colleagues under the Colombo Plan, Royal Perth Hospital, 1956.

## Sharing the Education Revolution

### *The Colombo Plan*

Our formal education relationship began under Australia's Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic Development in South and South East Asia. The Colombo Plan, as it became known, was established in 1951 as a cooperative venture for the economic and social advancement of people in the South and Southeast Asian regions. The venture included a program to sponsor students from the Commonwealth nations—later expanded to include 27 countries—to study in Australia. The newly-independent Federation of Malaya became a member in 1957 at a time of structural reorganisation of its own education system. Local education authorities were being established, boards and management frameworks put in place, and teacher training programs were being developed across the country. Malaya was also making the transition from a British curriculum to one that instilled the Malay language and literacy and fostered 'a common Malayan outlook'.<sup>3</sup> The tertiary sector was modest. The University of Malaya, incorporating the former Raffles College and King Edward VII College of Medicine, had been established in 1949. At independence this institution, together with the Technical College in Kuala Lumpur and the Serdang Agricultural College, made up Malaya's tertiary sector.

While Malaya's membership of the Colombo Plan marked the beginning of our formal education relationship in 1957, Australia was by then already an educational destination of choice for Malayan students. Like Australia, postwar Malaya was hungry for higher education and the Federation of Malaya's first Annual Report acknowledges that it 'is interesting to note the increasing tendency of students from Malaya to seek both university and the equivalent of VI Form education in Australia'.<sup>4</sup> The 1957 report records that 1669 Malayan students were studying at overseas universities and colleges, half of whom had chosen Australia. Of these, 699 were privately funded and only 160 were Colombo Plan students.<sup>5</sup> There were also 673 privately funded Malayan students at Australian technical colleges at this time. Recent research,



The Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, with university students from Malaya during his visit to Australia, November 1959.

however, highlights that the assistance of Colombo Plan scholarships in fact confirmed Australia's educational credentials, as recognition of the benefits of a Colombo Plan education in Australia to its recipients spread and 'opened the door to private fee paying students'<sup>6</sup> and to a vibrant education industry.

Today, Malaysians no longer study in Australia under the Colombo Plan but many undertake postgraduate study and research with the assistance of the Australian Government's prestigious Endeavour Scholarships. In 2015, 17 high-achieving Malaysian graduates won Endeavour Awards, including the Endeavour Vocational Education and Training Scholarship, Endeavour



Australian Prime Minister John Howard and High Commissioner James Wise with Endeavour Scholarship recipients, 2006.

Research Fellowship, Endeavour Postgraduate Scholarship (Masters), Endeavour Executive Fellowships, and the Endeavour Australia Cheung Kong Research Fellowship. Also available are the Australia–Malaysia ‘Towards 2020’ Executive Awards for civil servants to undertake professional development in Australia, plus a Research Fellowship in Australia.





### *Fair Dinkum Malaysians*

In Australia, the postwar educational revolution saw the demand for tertiary education soar. In 1946, adding to the six established ‘sandstone universities’,<sup>7</sup> the Australian National University (ANU) was opened, followed by the New South Wales University of Technology in 1949 and University of New England in 1954. By 1967, six more Australian universities had been established<sup>8</sup> and, by then, Malaysian and Australian tertiary education was firmly intertwined.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop with alumni of Australian universities at the launch of the New Colombo Plan in Malaysia, August 2015.



Students from Malaysia were part of life across Australia's mushrooming university campuses. In 1953, Samuel (Sam) Abraham, a Colombo Plan scholar from Kuala Lumpur studying medicine at the University of Adelaide, became the first Asian student to be elected President of the Student Representative Council at an Australian university.<sup>9</sup> Malaysian students lodged with Australian families and worked during term holidays in post offices and department stores, or picked fruit in the country to earn 'that extra pocket money', *The Straits Times* reported.<sup>10</sup>

## MANY NOT ONLY CULTIVATED FRIENDSHIPS, THEY FOUND THEIR LIFE PARTNERS AS A RESULT OF THEIR AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION

The cultural transition was not always easy, but as a Malaysian medical student wrote in one of the first editions of Monash University's student newspaper, *Lot's Wife*, in 1964, the 'Fair Dinkum Asian'

*... not only gain[s] the benefits of an education, but also acquire[s] a clearer insight into the Australian way of life, and cultivate[s] friendship and good will which they can cherish and propagate for the rest of their lives.*<sup>11</sup>

Many not only cultivated friendships, they found their life partners as a result of their Australian education. Professor Jamilah Ariffin, now Adjunct Professor in Global Health at Monash University, met her husband as a Colombo Plan student in Australia. And among Malaya's first Colombo Plan cohort was Hijjas Kasturi, now one of Malaysia's most celebrated architects. In 1971, Hijjas met his future wife, a young Australian in Kuala Lumpur with the Australian Volunteers Abroad program and, as we see later in Chapter 4, they have since built an inspiring artist's exchange program between their two countries.

Professor Jamilah Ariffin with other students at the University of Queensland (circa 1968).





**Professor Jamilah Ariffin**

Reminiscing about my years as a Colombo Plan scholar at La Trobe University, Melbourne, prompts funny, poignant, sad and even exhilarating memories.

Initially, I wanted to study at the University of Malaya where I could continue to play my favourite sport, hockey. But my elder siblings told me it would be unwise not to accept this golden opportunity to go overseas on a prestigious scholarship and then return to serve in the Malaysian Civil Service. So, reluctantly, I agreed to go to Australia.

Consequently, in March 1968, dressed in a proper Western suit and carrying a smart woollen coat, I boarded a small Fokker F27 Friendship and left behind my teary parents and several friends. In Melbourne we were whisked away to an etiquette class at the Victorian Department of Education and Science, to be schooled in the intricacies of Australian culture. We were aware that we were to become ‘young ambassadors’ of our country.

At La Trobe University in Bundoora, we were introduced to the earlier batch of Malaysian Colombo Plan students—the founding group, one of whom was Abdul Ghani Othman, my future husband! At a reunion with my former university mates of La Trobe University in December 2014, I found out that the Australian boys had been intrigued by this Asian girl with her flowing sarong kebaya, and they imagined she was a right royal Asian princess!



The first months of my new life in Australia were a tough adjustment, and while alone in my college room, I felt so desolate and could actually hear ‘the sound of silence’. However, I am always grateful that the Australian Master of Glen College, Mr. Meredith, the kind and motherly college maid, Mrs. Smith, as well as the staff and all my Australian university mates and students, were always so hospitable, friendly and helpful towards me. Hence, even now, I have a very positive opinion of Australians and Australia.



Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Abdullah Badawi (third from left), was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Technology at Curtin University of Technology, Perth, 22 February 2006.

From left: Professor Jeanette Hackett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Eric Tan, former Chancellor; Julie Bishop, Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training; Datuk Patinggy Tan Sri Dr George Chan Hong Nam, Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak; and Professor Lance Twomey, Vice-Chancellor.

Others such as Malaysia's Trade Minister Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, who graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1974 with a first class Honours degree in Economics, have gone on to successful political careers. Australian universities in turn have recognised the contribution of Malaysian leaders. Dato' Sri Mustapa was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Commerce in 1997, with former Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi accepting an Honorary Doctorate from Curtin University in 2006 and Prime Minister Najib Razak receiving an Honorary Doctorate from Monash University in 2011. In celebrating the success of postwar Malaysian students, however, we should not forget the success of earlier students who sought further education in Australia. For example, Tun Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman—Malaysia's Deputy



Prime Minister (1970–73)—who, in 1945, was the first Malaysian to graduate with a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) from the University of Melbourne.

*Charting the way for Malaysians 'down under'*

In 1976, 3139 private Malaysian students were in post-secondary and higher education in Australia and this more than doubled, to over 7000, in the next decade.<sup>12</sup> In 1975, the Malaysian Government recognised the growth in demand for an Australian education and purchased a motel in Sydney for student accommodation. The following year, in May 1976, Malaysia Hall was opened by then High Commissioner Tun Dr Awang Hassan. This was followed by Malaysia Halls in Melbourne and Perth. Far from the sometimes apprehensive students of the 1950s and 1960s, Malaysians are today one of the most organised groups of international students in Australia, with student associations across 23 Australian university campuses, all of which are affiliated with a national body, the Malaysian Students' Council of Australia (MASCA).<sup>13</sup> MASCA's motto 'Charting the way for Malaysians Down Under' manifests in a highly organised program of activities, including the Malaysian Summit of Australia, the Australian Network Leaders Summit, the Down Under Camp, and the Majlis Perwakilan Pelajar Luar Negara (MPPLN) Public Policy event which, with the support of the Malaysian Government, encourages debate on public policy in Malaysia.<sup>14</sup>

The Australia–Malaysia Institute (AMI) and MASCA also developed a strong interactive relationship which has centred around ensuring that Malaysian students not only enjoy their education while in Australia, but have opportunities to interact socially with Australians and to participate in the cultural and sporting activities that feature in Australian life. The Malaysian Student Council of Sydney also holds an annual Malaysian Festival—known as MFest—and 2015 marks its twenty-ninth year. In 2014, 28 000 Sydneysiders participated in MFest activities, which include music, dance, theatre and, of course, food.



**Puteri Faten Fatehah**  
**Megad Mohd Nizar**  
**Chairperson**  
**MASCA Victoria (2014-15)**

It all began in July 2013 during winter. I flew all the way from Kuala Lumpur to Melbourne on an eight hour journey. Heavy gushes of rain and blistering wind welcomed us upon our arrival. A sea of umbrellas was a familiar sight back then. It was pretty cold and gloomy.

Long story short, now I have been here for three years. Just like other aspiring students, I'm here to complete my undergraduate studies, a Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology to be exact. God willing, by mid-2016, I'm going to graduate from The University of Melbourne with hopefully a deserving scroll of honour.

Being a Malaysian student studying in Australia, I learnt to step out of my comfort zone. I still remember the moment I volunteered to be the host for orientation week in the university. It was an exciting yet a challenging responsibility to help a group of new students to discover the hidden gems of the prestigious institution. We had fun getting to know each other while at the same time preparing ourselves for university life. As the circle was comprised of different nationalities, I have come to realise the importance of embracing diversity—a significant similarity of celebrating the multicultural diversity that I love between Australia and Malaysia.

And this experience was only a snippet moment of my life here. I am humbled enough to travel around, to be a part of a student organisation and learning the history of this land both formally and informally. I believe there is a lot more knowledge to be sought, endless experiences to be gained and infinite adventures to be embarked on. And I am more grateful than ever to be in the land Down Under. With the hope of spreading love, I look forward to a more fulfilling journey ahead.

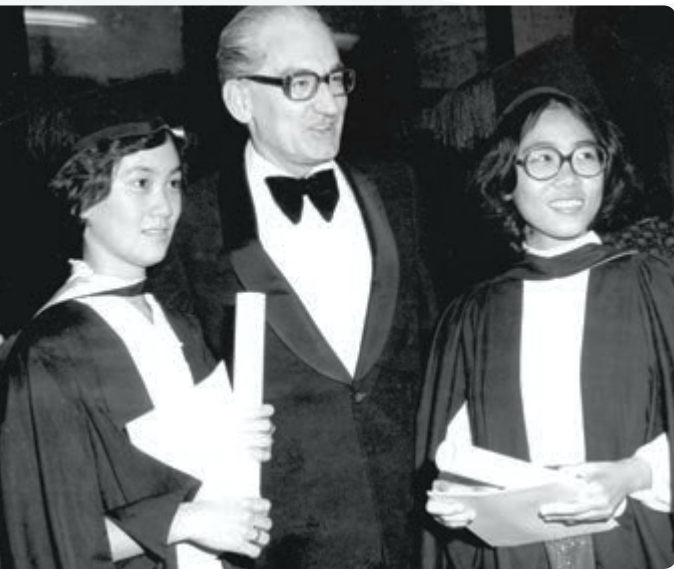
MFest organisers noted that 47 per cent of these visitors were Malaysians. That the remaining 53 per cent came from beyond the Malaysian community highlights the extent to which the Australia–Malaysia education relationship represents so much more than a mere transaction for education services.<sup>15</sup>

## Rebalancing the Regional Education Network

### *The regional approach*

By the 1960s, while Malaysian study in Australia was flourishing, there was a strong regional emphasis on education developing at the same time, marked by the establishment, in 1965, of the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), predating the establishment of ASEAN. Australia shared this vision of regional education cooperation. As Australia's trade and strategic relations with Malaysia—and Southeast Asia more broadly—matured in the 1970s, so too did the style of education partnerships. While the numbers of independently funded students outweighed those studying under Colombo Plan scholarships in Australia, there was the perception of international education as being 'based on the twin pillars of goodwill and development.'<sup>16</sup> This dynamic started to shift with the emerging collaborative regional consciousness in the early 1970s.

In 1971, SEAMEO approached Australia with a view to expanding its membership and, in 1973, Australia became one of the first countries to be admitted as an Associate Member.<sup>17</sup> Today, education is a priority area for the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) includes commitments to education under its Specific Services Commitments. For Malaysia and Australia, the education partnership was further expanded under the Malaysia–Australia Free Trade Agreement (MAFTA) which enables Australian service providers to hold 100 per cent ownership in privately funded higher education institutions in Malaysia.



Malaysian students graduating from the University of Western Australia, 1975.

### *Taking Australian education to Malaysia*

The MAFTA outcome highlights another important dimension of the vibrant Australia–Malaysia education relationship—Australian education in Malaysia. Australian university branch campuses in Malaysia, Australian degrees delivered through Malaysian institutional partnerships, together with schools and colleges teaching the Australian curriculum, enable students to get an Australian education without having to travel and live overseas. This concept was pioneered in 1969 with the opening of a Taylor’s College, a university preparation programs provider, in Kuala Lumpur offering ‘for the first time an Australian program, the Victorian High School Certificate’ to 345 students. Taylor’s College at its Subang Jaya campus and Sri Hartamas campus continues to serve as a pathway to Australian, as well as a range of other international, universities.<sup>18</sup> In 1998 Monash University opened a campus in Kuala Lumpur, followed by the Curtin University campus in Sarawak in 1999, and Swinburne University of Technology, also in Sarawak, in 2000.

The Curtin campus at Miri in the north of Sarawak is the result of a unique and continuing partnership between the university and the State Government of Sarawak that followed a Sarawak approach to Curtin in 1998. At the time, notably, both the Chief and Deputy Chief Ministers and a number of members of the State Cabinet had been former Colombo Plan students in Australia. As well as attending an Australian university campus in Malaysia, there are numerous opportunities for Malaysian students to study for Australian qualifications through local institutions working in partnerships with Australian universities. Students also have the option of pursuing part of their degree in Malaysia and part in Australia.

The Australian Government’s support of Australian education in Malaysia is long-standing and was confirmed with the recent announcement of the inaugural Australia–Malaysia ‘Towards 2020’ scholarships— a five-year program offering undergraduate scholarships for study at an Australian university in Malaysia.



Graduation ceremony at Curtin University Sarawak, 2012.



Students at Swinburne University Sarawak Campus.



## THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT OF AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA IS LONG-STANDING...



High Commissioner Peter Varghese with Malaysian Minister of Education Tan Sri Dr Musa Mohamad (centre) at an Australia Asia Awards ceremony, 2001.

### *The Colombo Plan legacy*

Though the focus of the formal Australia–Malaysian education relationship that began with the Colombo Plan has shifted from education in Australia to that of a regional education, the legacy of the Colombo Plan continues through new reciprocal scholarship initiatives. These include the Malaysia Australia Colombo Plan Commemorative Scholarship scheme. This scheme was initiated in 2012 by The Malaysian Australian Alumni Council (MAAC) to mark the 60th anniversary of the Colombo Plan. The MAAC, founded in 1996 after the Malaysian Australian University Alumni Convention in Kuala Lumpur, is supported by the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur and the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade).

The Colombo Plan also inspired Australia's Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, to launch a new initiative in 2013, known as the New Colombo Plan (NCP). The vision of the NCP is to transform and deepen connections with our neighbours and, over time, ensure that Australian students make study in the region a priority. The Australian Government has committed A\$100 million in funding to the NCP over five years to support both a prestigious scholarship program and a flexible grants program aimed at increasing the numbers of Australian undergraduates studying and undertaking internships in the Indo–Pacific region. The NCP initiative has been warmly welcomed within the region. At the 9th East Asia Summit meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, in 2014, the Chairman noted:

*We welcome the Australian Government's New Colombo Plan (NCP) and its expansion to all ASEAN Member States from 2015. The NCP will support increasing two-way student mobility between Australia and the region and contribute to strengthening education collaboration.<sup>19</sup>*



**Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman**  
**Dean of Medicine**  
**University of Malaya**

I spent a large part of my early adult life in Australia—15 years to be exact. First in sixth form then as a medical student and finally as a young doctor training to be an infectious diseases specialist. It is no surprise then that Australia and Australians have in many ways shaped me into who I am today.

It was only natural after all those years that many of the good points about the Australian way of life and values rubbed off on me. First and foremost is the eternal sense of optimism—cringe as we may at the greeting “she’ll be right, mate”, it pretty much sums up the optimistic nature that many Australians possess. Australians are also known for their no nonsense attitude.

Coming from Malaysia where things tend to be much more formal and hierarchical, this attitude and that of equality for all is something that I very much admire and appreciate; for instance, a bus driver in Australia is given equal respect to that of a university professor. One ingredient that I also think has contributed to making Australia successful—and often seen to be punching way above its weight in the global arena—is the community spirit, team work, mateship and camaraderie. Australians would often band together as a team and support one another, yet competitively push each other to greater heights.

It is these qualities and more—in addition to the formal education that I received—which I feel have benefited me most after all those years in Australia. I continue to feel a very strong sense of attachment to Australia, not least because I ended up marrying an Aussie, but also for all the opportunities that it continues to afford me. From the recent honour, the Advance Global Alumni Award, that was bestowed upon me by my alma mater Monash University, to the continued engagement through educational and research collaborations that have been forged between my faculty and the various institutions across Australia.



Robert Carmichael from Australian Universities Quality Agency and Dato' Syed Ahmad Ahmad Hussein from Malaysian Qualifications Agency exchange a Memorandum of Cooperation, witnessed by Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin and High Commissioner Penny Williams, 2009.

At the launch of the New Colombo Plan in Malaysia in August 2015, Ms Bishop declared:

*I want it to be a rite of passage for undergraduates in our universities, the young people who are going to be the leaders of the future, to have an experience of living, studying and working in our region. Coming back to Australia with new perspectives, new ideas, new insights and with friendships and connections that will hopefully last a lifetime.<sup>20</sup>*

In 2016, the program will support over 270 Australian undergraduates to undertake study and internships in Malaysia. The NCP is also supporting new people-to-people and institutional linkages between Australia and Malaysia.

## Building Intellectual Capital

### *Research and development in the sciences*

In 1985, the Governments of Australia and Malaysia signed an MOU on Scientific and Technological Cooperation and have since cooperated on a wide range of research partnerships across a number of sectors that include medicine, engineering, computer science, agricultural and biological sciences. The intervening years have seen a broad spectrum of cooperative frameworks functioning on both a bilateral and multilateral basis and many remain ongoing. For example, in 1998, the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering signed a joint MOU with the Academy of Science Malaysia. In 2012, scientists from the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) started work on a project in Kajang, Malaysia, on the problem of chronic levels of air pollution common in some of Asia's largest cities. ANSTO contributes to several regional programs and joined this project under a Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA)<sup>21</sup> and Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA) program.<sup>22</sup>



**Tyce Barton, New Colombo Plan Scholar**

I have aspired to be a New Colombo Plan scholar since the commencement of the program. As a student studying renewable energy engineering and commerce, I saw it as a fantastic opportunity to study in Malaysia; a place where I had travelled in 2014 with university colleagues and had been blown away with a factory tour of a solar cell manufacturing plant. Through the program, I believed I could learn about fascinating new technologies at the University of Malaya, utilise that knowledge by undertaking an internship in the region and through this process, develop international business links.

However, since arriving in Malaysia, I have realised that the New Colombo Plan is about so much more than that! It is also about challenging yourself in a new culture, learning to respect and appreciate that culture and educating others of the Australian culture. It is this acceptance and understanding that breaks down barriers between cultures and fosters a more peaceful and prosperous future for us all.

I have also come to realise that being an ambassador for Australia is not a responsibility, but rather a great privilege. Through seeing the passion the Malaysian people hold for their country and the joy that they have in telling me of the Malaysian culture, I am compelled to share with them what I love about Australia and let them know that they are always welcome in our country. Equally, I find myself regularly telling Australians what they are missing out on if they do not come and visit this beautiful country!

I have now completed an intensely rewarding language course in Bahasa Malaysia. I am looking forward to further practicing this language so that I can form more profound relationships with local students and lecturers. I also look forward to getting involved in extracurricular activities at university, giving me the ability to network with a new student cross-section.

The New Colombo Plan experience is set to be my best yet!



The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) has also worked closely with Malaysian institutions in a number of areas. In 1998, the CSIRO and Universiti Putra Malaysia signed Letters of Agreement to work on human nutrition, and Relationship Agreements are in place with SCS Computer Systems Sdn Bhd (2000) and the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (2001). In 2003 the CSIRO and PRSB, the research arm of Petronas, entered into an MOU and, in 2007, embarked on a project combining their expertise on petroleum exploration and production, alternative energies, and advanced materials technologies.<sup>23</sup> Further collaboration is also underway with the Malaysia–Australia Agricultural Cooperation Working Group (MAACWG) established in 2000. The MAACWG’s activities are wide-ranging across agriculture, fisheries, agrifood, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) and operational quarantine matters.<sup>24</sup> In 2007, at a meeting in Putrajaya, the MAACWG agreed to expand the role of the working group to include forestry, addressing issues such as illegal logging.

## THE GOVERNMENTS OF AUSTRALIA AND MALAYSIA HAVE SINCE COOPERATED ON A WIDE RANGE OF RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS A NUMBER OF SECTORS

### *Deep connections in the humanities*

Research in the humanities is also a rich source of intellectual exchange between our two countries. Monash University has played an important role since the 1960s, led by anthropologists such as Michael Swift, Wendy Smith and Malay literature scholar Cyril Skinner. In 1993, a Centre for Malaysian Studies (CMS) was established at the university and it remains one of only three such centres in the world. At the time it opened, the *New Straits Times* reported that the CMS signified ‘a historical leap forward’ in the study of Malaysia in Australia.<sup>25</sup> The CMS is affiliated with 18 tertiary institutions across Malaysia and collaborations are multi-disciplinary. Australian academics are among the world’s leading Malaysia specialists and many



Dr Yvonne Ho, AM

When my family migrated to Australia, my parents had to give up their successful careers and social network mid-life, in exchange for new jobs and innumerable household chores in an unfamiliar country. They did all this for us, their children and they were always with us, as a family.

We are descendants of native English-speaking professionals, a dynasty of doctors and educationalists, including internationally acclaimed Cambridge-educated physician, Dr Wu Lien-teh, who was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1935. However, because Malaysians were scarce in Melbourne in the 1970s, we were a curiosity. At school, I was once asked by a classmate if Malaysians lived in trees. Many were bewildered that our ancestors spoke English. Most mistakenly assumed our parents owned a Chinese restaurant.

With time, things changed. Through our integration into society, informal cultural exchanges led to a greater understanding between us and our Australian friends. We are now an established family here, and I have a family of my own. I became a fourth generation medical doctor and the first Victorian woman—and first Australian woman of Asian heritage—to be qualified as both a radiologist and nuclear medicine specialist. My connection with Asia has remained strong, and I co-pioneered the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) fellowship program in Asia.

My interest in education is not confined to the medical profession. I have a parallel career in music education. As a teenager I taught piano and played percussion and drums, and for many years sang with a four-part singing group. Our successful education flagship 'Charteris Music School' is a great pride.

As well as accepting public-speaking engagements, I serve on numerous boards and advise the government in various fields. I am also a businessperson with a successful track record. Through all these various roles, I continue to build strategic relations with Malaysia and Asia.

In 2015, I became the first Malaysian-born woman to be awarded Member (AM) of the General Division of the Order of Australia. My previous awards include the Australia Awards (2014) and my induction to the Victorian Women's Honour Roll (2013). I am also proud to represent this country as an Australia Day Ambassador.



Australian Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove and Lady Cosgrove with students at Monash University Malaysia, August 2015.

highly respected Malaysian academics retain links to Australian universities. Professor Datuk Shamsul Amri Baharuddin (better known as Shamsul AB), a doctoral graduate from Monash University, is now Director of the Institute of Ethnic Studies at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and a prolific author on Malay history and culture, and colonial and post-colonial forms of knowledge. He is joined by many other impressive Australia–Malaysia alumni, such as the distinguished educator and author, Professor Jamilah Ariffin, also a Monash graduate, and Professor Prema-chandra Athukorala, a graduate of La Trobe University who is now Professor of Economics at the ANU in Canberra. From its earliest years, ANU has been a home to some of Australia’s leading Malaysia specialists. They include economists EK Fisk, Wolfgang Kasper, Heinz Wolfgang Arndt and Hal Hill; historians Emily Sadka, William Roff and Anthony Milner; literature specialists Anthony Jones, Virginia Hooker and Ian Proudfoot; and political scientists Harold Crouch and John Funston.

### *Connecting young Australians to Malaysia*

Although, traditionally, the higher education sector dominates discussions surrounding international education exchange, there are growing numbers of linkages across Australian and Malaysian primary and secondary schools. Leading the way since the 1990s has been the Asia Education Foundation (AEF), which has developed curriculum content for Years 2 through to 10 to educate Australian children about Malaysia. The curriculum covers English, History, Geography, Science and the Arts, providing links to our respective government websites, and Malaysian films and media outlets, so that young Australians can develop a sound understanding of their Malaysian neighbours.<sup>26</sup> The AEF has also worked extensively with the AMI on several initiatives that bring Australian and Malaysian school educators together.

## THE AEF HAS WORKED EXTENSIVELY WITH THE AMI ON SEVERAL INITIATIVES THAT BRING AUSTRALIAN AND MALAYSIAN SCHOOL EDUCATORS TOGETHER

In 2012, the 'Malaysia Unplugged' program took five Australian school principals and ten teaching staff to Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak and, in 2015, the Australia Malaysia BRIDGE Project was launched. Under this program, eight Australian and eight Malaysian teachers spent time in Kuala Lumpur and Perth in April and May, respectively, to strengthen language skills, build cultural understanding and enhance digital teaching capabilities. AEF and the BRIDGE program not only bring teachers and students together, but work to stimulate deeper cultural learning with a regional focus. In November 2014, for example, the AEF presented a series of workshops on global citizenship and intercultural learning. This took place at the East Asia Regional Council of Schools' (EARCOS) Education Leaders Conference in Kota Kinabalu, which was attended by a range of international schools.





Two students from SMK Tinggi Perempuan Secondary school in Melaka, holding a letter from Year 7 students from Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College in Geelong, during the Malaysia Unplugged 2012 study tour.

## Exchanging Views on Policy and Politics

Also nourishing the relationship is the mutual policy dialogue maintained through an active program of Track Two diplomacy initiatives, such as those convened by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), and Asialink. These meetings foster expert policy discussions among think-tanks, academics, government representatives and the media. ISIS Malaysia has been at the forefront of these regional meetings since the founding of the ASEAN-ISIS network in 1988, and it is host of the largest such regional gathering, the Asia Pacific Roundtable (APR) held annually in Kuala Lumpur.

When Asialink launched its first regional Track Two diplomacy initiative, the Asialink *Conversations*, held in Melbourne in 2002 and sponsored by the Myer Foundation, it did so with the strong support of ISIS Malaysia. Firmly establishing the *Conversations*, the second in the series was held in Malaysia in 2004 and it has since become an important Track Two program in the Asia region. Asialink has also worked in partnership with ISIS Malaysia (and the Asia New Zealand Foundation) since 2008 to convene an annual Track Two ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand (AANZ) Dialogue. The AANZ Dialogue is convened to coincide with annual CSCAP meetings, thereby covering a broad range of policy issues, ranging from defence and disaster relief, to trade and cultural matters. ISIS Malaysia is also central to the Australia–ASEAN Emerging Leaders Program (A2ELP) sponsored by the Australia–Malaysia Institute since 2011.<sup>27</sup> The A2ELP brings young Australians together with emerging leaders from all ten ASEAN countries to attend the APR where they interact with some of the region's most distinguished specialists and build networks of next-generation leaders.



Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop participating in a teleconference between Malaysian students in Selangor and Australian students in Christmas Island through the BRIDGE Project, August 2015.



Australian Teacher Kira Monaghan, from Duncraig Senior High School Western Australia, working with a student from Sekolah Menengah Sains Sultan Mahmud, Kuala Terengganu during the BRIDGE Project Malaysia, 2015.



**Deborah Moore**  
Teacher  
Armidale High School  
New South Wales

As a Japanese teacher, Bahasa Indonesia speaker, and a lover of Asian culture, it was my dream to engage our students with the diverse cultures of Asia. When the BRIDGE project opportunity arose I was quick to embrace this chance to form a meaningful relationship with a school in Malaysia. Luckily my principal shared my vision and our application was successful!

Armidale High School (AHS), located in regional New South Wales, provides students with limited opportunities to engage with Asia and Asians. Yet we live in a globally connected environment, so must incorporate Asian perspectives into our teaching and learning. Not only is it a curriculum priority but also an essential skill for our students.

Going to Malaysia to meet with my partner teacher Rohaiza Tapsir at Sekolah Tun Fatimah (STF) School in Johor Bahru, we planned an exciting journey for our students. Rohaiza taught me about Malaysian culture, allowing me to truly connect with her and the Malaysian people. Then teaching the girls participating in the program in person was such a great experience. I am still teaching them using our online classroom Edmodo and we interact daily. This experience has led to the forming of some deep friendships.

Our project begins with the Flat Traveller (FT) exchange, where the girls in Malaysia make FTs of themselves for distribution among my students at AHS. My students are currently preparing their FTs, 'showing' the Malaysian girls at STF life in Australia through digital stories. Rohaiza then takes our FTs back after her visit to Armidale in June. We will also use Adobe Connect (a video conferencing tool) to share our work and continue 'chatting' on Edmodo.

I have been impressed with the level of engagement between students from both countries—and their enthusiasm is contagious! It is a project that not only benefits students and staff, but also the wider community, promoting cross-cultural understanding. Thanks to the Australia–Malaysia Institute and DFAT for providing teachers with this invaluable experience—and thank you Rohaiza and the amazing staff and students at STF. It is an honour to work with you on this project.





The Fourth Australia-New Zealand ASEAN Dialogue  
Group meeting in Kuala Lumpur, 2011.

Today, we see that, with the widening of studies, educational exchanges and research to include all levels from primary through to postgraduate and the introduction of the New Colombo Plan, the chain of Australia–Malaysia education links with their broader academic, political, business, sporting, cultural and social benefits is now full circle. This complex web of educational and intellectual links developed over 60 years provides Australians and Malaysians with a network of enduring partnerships, endowing both our nations with a wealth of friendship and mutual understanding.





**Dato Professor Lance Twomey AO, PSBS (Sarawak), PhD.  
Chair, Australia–Malaysia Institute Board (2009–2015)**

As well as marking the 60th anniversary of Australia–Malaysia diplomacy this year, we are also celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Australia–Malaysia Institute (AMI). Since 2005, the AMI has been funded by successive Australian governments, with administrative and management support from the Southeast Asia section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). I am pleased to have had the opportunity to be Chairman of the Advisory Board of the AMI for the last six years.

The mandate of the Institute was to support, enhance and extend the people-to-people linkages between Australians and Malaysians and between complementary public and private institutions. Strengthening education, intercultural and youth interaction has been a central part of our work, as well as the fostering and further development of leadership potential. The Board considered it critical that the programs given financial support should have individuals from both nations and when appropriate, from other neighbouring countries as well. The AMI facilitated this by means of: (a) an annual grant round, to which individuals and groups from Australia and Malaysia could apply; and (b) by initiatives generated by the AMI itself. Among the latter cultural, experiential and development projects, which are often bilateral, include (among others):

- young political leaders experiential visits;
- young diplomats experiential visits;
- sister schools linkages and visits (students and/or teachers);
- cultural exchange and internships;
- media exchange and internships;
- sports collaboration and assistance (coaches and/or athletes);
- interfaith dialogue;
- support for Malaysian students in Australia;
- the Australia-ASEAN Emerging Leaders Program (A2ELP), a highly successful project jointly supported by the Australia–Thailand and Australia–Indonesia Institutes since 2011. The A2ELP has spawned a large alumni group of enterprising young people of considerable potential.

Prior to my time with the AMI, as Vice-Chancellor of Curtin University, I had the extraordinary good fortune to work with the Sarawak State Government on a joint project to develop a branch campus at Miri in the north of the state. Curtin University Miri is now in its 16th year, contains over 4500 students, including international students from more than 40 other countries. More recently I completed a workforce project for the Chief Minister of Sarawak to determine their professional and workforce requirements for a major industrial coastal development under construction just south of Miri.



A2ELP participants with students from St. Michael High School Sabah, 2014.



**Professor Anthony Milner,**  
**AM FASSA**  
**Basham Professor of**  
**Asian History**  
**Australian National University**

It seems remarkable to think that I have been involved with Malaysia as an historian for nearly 50 years. Over the last two decades, I have also participated in a range of Track Two initiatives with Malaysia as International Director of Asialink and Co-Chair of the Australian Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation (CSCAP). These initiatives have national significance as Australians seek to deepen their engagement in Asia. ‘Track Two’ means ‘not government-led’, but nevertheless, these initiatives are responsive to government endeavours. At their best, Track Two meetings offer the opportunity for very frank exchanges, exploratory thinking and valuable relationship-building.

In a sense, Malaysia has been an ideal partner. We know one another well and are open with each other—and the fact that we sometimes have different views gives us a good deal to talk about. Discussions about economic, security and educational relations with Malaysians at Track Two meetings prepare Australians for wider Asian engagement. At CSCAP meetings, for example, tough security matters are deliberated on and Malaysia is centrally important in these discussions. Australian organisations facilitating Track Two dialogues, such as Asialink and the St James Ethics Centre, have sought Malaysian partner organisations to develop wider Asian networks. On their part the Malaysians—most especially the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia—have helped to ‘socialise’ Australia, drawing us into regional processes.

Australia is an active player in Track Two forums, and each year partners with the Asia New Zealand Foundation for the annual ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Dialogue, hosted by ISIS Malaysia. This dialogue brings academics, members of the media and corporate sectors, and senior public servants (in their private capacity) to the table. These discussions have often helped to moderate various thorny issues in Australia’s regional relations. Some of our most lively Malaysian collaborators have been trained in Australia. “You wonder why I am so outspoken about Australia’s faults”, said one prominent Malaysian to an Asialink group (which included Prime Minister Howard): “it was my training at Monash University that made me a tough critic”.

## CHAPTER 4



Dame Pattie Menzies greeting a schoolgirl, Rohanan bte Mah Fotz, during a visit to Selangor to see a new water supply provided by the Australian Government under the Colombo Plan, 8 December 1959.

A Special People-to-  
People Connection



As we have seen, Australia–Malaysia contact criss-crosses many avenues of mutual interest—defence and security partnerships, trade and investment relationships and education—but very special connections have also been made through tourism, migration, the arts and sport. These connections are equally long-standing and remain durable through a constant organic flow stimulated by curiosity, creativity and collaboration. In Australia, the number of Malaysian migrants has gradually increased over 60 years, while the Australian expat community in Malaysia is a well established part of society. As early as 1950, Australians joined up with New Zealanders to form the Malaysian, Australian and New Zealand Association (MANZA), which remains active today, with its own MANZA House in the Kuala Lumpur suburb of Bangsar.<sup>1</sup> As expat communities from both countries have laid enduring foundations, so too has mutual curiosity been fulfilled through tourism and explorations of the arts.

## AUSTRALIANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COMFORTABLE AT THE HEART OF ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL LIFE IN MALAYSIA

Artistic ties date back to the 1940s and 1950s, and from its very beginnings, the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur recognised the value of culture as a means of building friendship and mutual understanding. Australians have always been comfortable at the heart of artistic and cultural life in Malaysia. Equally, sport has been a conduit to friendship. Whether this has taken place over a game of golf between diplomats or businessmen, or through an emerging network of young athletes, sport now takes its place among the ever-expanding complex of Australia–Malaysia relations. Cycling, swimming, surf lifesaving, badminton, field hockey and netball all feature in our shared passion for sport. Malaysia also has connections with some of Australia’s most iconic sporting events, notably the Melbourne Cup and Australian Rules football.

## Malaysians in Australia

### *Making Australia home*

Possibly the first Malay immigrant to Australia was a 22 year-old convict named Ajoup who arrived in Sydney on 11 January 1837. Ajoup, described as ‘of the Malay faith’, had been sentenced in Cape Town, South Africa, to 14 years transportation to New South Wales. He received his ticket of leave—that is, his freedom—in the colony in 1843.<sup>2</sup> But it would be some years later before Malays came to Australia in any numbers, mainly to work in the pearl diving industry. The 1871 colonial census records that 149 Malays were working in Australia as pearl divers in northern and western Australia, labourers in South Australia’s mines, and on Queensland’s sugar plantations. At Federation in 1901, there were 932 Malay pearl divers in Australia, increasing to 1860 by 1921.<sup>3</sup> It was not until the mid-twentieth century, though, that a Malay presence was more firmly established. As well as students, evacuees from the Malayan Emergency began arriving in Australia in the 1950s. The 1961 Census shows that there were 5793 Malaysian-born people among the Australian population at the time. This number has increased significantly and Australia’s Malaysian-born population was recorded in 2013 as 148 760, making them the 9th largest immigrant group in the country.<sup>4</sup>

Like their student compatriots, many Malaysians who now call Australia home are one of the most cohesive and organised communities in the country. In 2007, a report to an inquiry into Australia’s relations with Malaysia stated that ‘Malaysian born people are one of the best communities we have in Australia for integrating into the Australian community.’<sup>5</sup> As a highly active and organised group, Malaysian–Australians have made and continue to make a significant contribution to their adopted country. In the early 1970s, the Malaysian community was very much a part of Australia’s transition to a multicultural society. At the forefront of this cultural change was the Australia Malaysian Singaporean Association which was formed in Sydney in 1970 and ‘evolved into an autonomous organisation committed to multiculturalism and



Prominent Muslim Australian media commentator Susan Carland was the guest speaker at the Australian High Commission's Buka Puasa (breaking of the fast dinner), 2014.

social and community concerns.<sup>6</sup> All around Australia similar community organisations and groups now connect Malaysians locally, nationally, and internationally.

#### *Community building through faith*

Included in the many community groups that have been formed is the Malay Australian Association of New South Wales (MAAN), established in 1988 to offer support to Malay Muslims in Australia.<sup>7</sup> Today, there are Malay mosques in Perth and Sydney, and a Masjid Building Project is underway in Victoria led by the Malay Education and Cultural Centre Australia (MECCA), with the assistance of Australian architect Julian Harding, who has been involved in the building of several mosques in Malaysia.<sup>8</sup> Faith is an integral part of Malaysian life and is a constructive area of intercultural understanding. The Muslim Leadership Program (MLP), an initiative run by Melbourne's La Trobe University in partnership with the Islamic Council of Victoria since 2007, convenes week-long civic education courses in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney that introduce ways to 'build partnerships with other faith-based communities and the larger society' and work towards a more resilient society.<sup>9</sup> In 2012, the Australia—Malaysia Institute (AMI) launched the Australia–Malaysia Muslim Exchange Program. The program enables young Muslim leaders from both countries to visit the other and take part in a range of activities aimed at enhancing cultural understanding and awareness and establishing networks between our two countries.

The Australian High Commission has also showcased Australia's diversity and vibrant Muslim community through public diplomacy visit programs featuring prominent Australian Muslims including Waleed Aly, Professor Samina Yasmeen and Susan Carland.



(From left) Malaysian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dato' Sri Anifah Aman with his wife, Datin Sri Siti Rubiah Abdul Samad, Australian High Commission Counsellor Ridwaan Jadwat and Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia Rod Smith at the High Commissioner's Buka Puasa dinner in 2014.



Muslim Exchange Program participants (from left) Nur Atiqah Mohd Zaki, Dyana Sofya and Yana Rizal.









Australia-Malaysia Youth Forum 2015, at the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur.

## Australians in Malaysia

### *Discovering Malaysia*

Up until the 1950s, few Australians, apart from servicemen and businessmen, travelled to Malaya, but those who did were impressed by its beauty and friendliness. In 1939, accountant, popular historian and travel writer Frank Clune, in his book *Isles of Spice* (1942), described the approach over the Malacca Straits as ‘one of the world’s most beautiful sights.’<sup>10</sup> But for most Australians, tourism, even in the 1950s and 1960s, was still a luxury and travelling Australians, in the main, opted for a visit ‘home’ to the United Kingdom. The change came with our close cooperation during the Emergency and *Konfrontasi*, when Malaysia became a point of familiarity and a tourist destination on a largely unexplored Asian horizon. This familiarity was captured, and transmitted, through Radio Butterworth, or RRB, which broadcast from the RAAF Base for the first time on 1 August 1960. RRB was run entirely by volunteers and their eclectic musical programming—‘Giants of Jazz,’ ‘Discs-a-Gogo,’ ‘Countdown Top 40’ and ‘Great Music of the Films’—filtered through to RAAF personnel, local Malaysians and Australian tourists. Staying at the Eastern & Oriental Hotel or the Lone Pine Hotel in Batu Ferringhi, tourists ‘would be listening to the radio in their rooms or by the beach,’ the music punctuated by news updates and the ‘Window on Australia’ program.<sup>11</sup> When the Malaysian Government resumed command of the Butterworth Base in 1988, RRB ceased to broadcast, but it lives on through today’s social media.<sup>12</sup>

UP UNTIL THE 1950s,  
FEW AUSTRALIANS, TRAVELLED TO MALAYA,  
BUT THOSE WHO DID WERE IMPRESSED BY ITS BEAUTY  
AND FRIENDLINESS

### *From backpackers to boom*

In so many ways Australia ‘discovered’ its Southeast Asian neighbourhood in the 1970s and the number of Australians travelling to Malaysia increased





The Australian High Commission Christmas Party at the High Commissioner's residence in December 1971.

significantly. The new package tour phenomenon took advantage of the familiarity with Malaysia gained over the previous two decades and catered to the curious but cautious Australian tourist. Similarly, young backpackers often chose Malaysia as the starting point for their journeys into Asia. In 1975, Australia's Lonely Planet travel guide published its first volume, *Southeast Asia on a Shoestring*, which remains the biggest selling guide to the region. That year, 28 270 Australians travelled to Malaysia.<sup>13</sup> For backpackers in those early days, a night at the Majestic Hotel in Malacca was recommended for just A\$2 a night. Such has been the transformation of Malaysia's economy and its tourism market that, 40 years on, the luxurious Majestic Malacca is now far beyond the backpackers' means.



A real transformation began in the 1980s with the advent of two-way tourism campaigns. Recognising Australians' increasing desire to travel overseas, in 1984, the Malaysian Government launched a campaign to 'woo and win' them and sent a delegation of 70 representatives around Australia to showcase Malaysian food and culture.<sup>14</sup> Four years later, Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and Qantas reached an arrangement, whereby MAS increased flights into Sydney and Melbourne, and Qantas secured flights into Malaysia via Singapore. This coincided with a 'promotional blitz' during the World Expo in Brisbane that same year to attract Australians to Malaysia.<sup>15</sup>

## IN 2014, AUSTRALIAN VISITORS TO MALAYSIA TOTALLED 571 328

These efforts were successful. The number of Australians travelling to Malaysia in 1995 reached 88 600 and by 2005, this almost doubled to 159 600.<sup>16</sup> In 2014, Australian visitors to Malaysia totalled 571 328 and Australia currently ranks 8th among the leading country sources of tourists to Malaysia.<sup>17</sup> Malaysian visitors to Australia are similarly ranked, at 7th.<sup>18</sup> This two-way tourism traffic is driven, not only by cheaper availability of travel, but also by a diverse range of educational, professional, business and social reasons to visit one another's countries.

### *Living history in Sabah*

Over the past 20 years, Sabah has moved into the consciousness of the Australian traveller as one of the most poignant sites in Australia's war history. As recounted earlier, during the Pacific War, 2434 prisoners of war, predominantly Australians, were taken from Singapore to Sabah where the 'death march' took the lives of all but six Australians' lives.<sup>19</sup> Several treks along the route of the death march now take place each year and, on ANZAC Day, an increasing number of Australians attend the dawn service at Sandakan. On Sandakan Memorial Day, August 15, a service is also held to 'recognise the bond of friendship, support and understanding that has grown since that time between our countries.'<sup>20</sup> That

bond of friendship is frequently experienced by Australians in Sabah, who still encounter locals with poignant stories. Domima Akoi was just 12 when she encountered six escapees near the village of Paginatan, on the road to Ranau.

*One day, while feeding the pigs, she felt small pieces of wood landing at her feet. The next day it was pebbles. Domima noticed a thin white man waving at her, gesturing for food and water. She ran to tell her father, who told her to take the men some rice and fish, but to be very careful not to be seen. She did this for the next six days, three times a day. On the seventh day, the food was not touched, but a tobacco tin was left with six gold wedding rings inside. Later that day she heard gunfire in the forest and knew the men were dead.<sup>21</sup>*

Domima, and many like her, showed enormous courage and compassion, and are pleased to share their stories with Australian visitors, with whom they still feel a special bond.

## **Our Multicultural Melting Pot**

### *Culinary connections*

Over 60 years, as Australians and Malaysians have enriched their mutual understanding through immigration and travel, our two cultures have quietly blended within the multicultural fabric of Australian life. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Australian–Malaysian exchange of ideas around food, which has inspired a cross-pollination of culinary ventures. Malaysia's signature curry laksa has become a national favourite in Australia and cities across the country are now home to dozens of Malaysian restaurants, catering to Australians in search of satays, mee goreng, nasi lemak as well as laksa. In return, Melbourne's vibrant café scene has now migrated to Malaysia with the help of Malaysian coffee devotees returning home at the completion of their studies.



**Narelle McMurtrie**  
Hotelier

Malaysia has been my home since 1986. It was a love of food and heritage that made it easy to move into the Malaysian lifestyle, and allow my business to move between Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Langkawi and Penang. I started my restaurant Bon Ton in December 1986 in an old bungalow in Kuala Lumpur. This was followed by Jonkers in 1988, a beautiful old Peranakan shop-house in Malacca. Jonkers was a simple lunch restaurant with a handicraft, antique shop. At sunset, all the houses opened their doors and windows to the street, and people came out to chat. Experiences like this, you will never forget.

In 1994 I opened an outpost of the Kuala Lumpur restaurant on Langkawi Island, and soon after, started collecting 100 year old kampung houses to reassemble as a small resort. The life in Langkawi was a total change from KL and the Peranakan streets of Malacca. The island was, and still is, mainly populated by rice farmers, fishermen and farmers who enjoy a simple unhurried lifestyle. The minute you step onto the island, you have no choice but to unwind and relax.

I sold Bon Ton restaurant in 1999, realising we needed to expand, and in 2008 Temple Tree Resort was opened. It was more a heritage museum of antique houses collected from around peninsular Malaysia, covering many different cultural styles. We now have Temple Tree Resort, which has 20 rooms, with its own restaurant and two swimming pools, and Bon Ton Resort, comprising eight houses and one pool. Both resorts support our foundation, LASSie, an animal shelter and sanctuary started 12 years ago on Langkawi.

In 2005 I bought two rows of shop-houses as a small hotel in Penang. Then came China House in 2011, three old Chinese shop-houses traversing two streets. China House brought me full circle. We had shops, antiques, art exhibitions, and a café theatre, which was a first. Penang is Malaysia in a capsule, with all cultures side by side. This is what I love about Malaysia.

To celebrate this mutual passion for food, Australia has been working with Malaysia on some inspiring ideas promoting culinary tourism. In 2014, Tourism Australia took its 'Restaurant Australia' initiative to Malaysia to 'refresh co-partnerships with new ideas' and to treat guests to an Australian-inspired meal, highlighting seafood and Australian wines.<sup>22</sup> Tourism Australia, in partnership with Austrade, also launched the 'Masak di Malaysia, Makan di Australia' (Cook in Malaysia, Dine in Australia) Culinary Challenge in 2014. The initiative sought to identify Malaysia's young up-and-coming chefs. The winner, 19-year-old Lee Jen Kwok, received a seven-day trip to sample Australia's finest restaurants, attend a master class with a leading Australian chef and visit fresh produce markets and famous tourist destinations.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Australia's Malaysian celebrity chefs*

Some of Australia's best known celebrity chefs originate from Malaysia. Cheong Liew, who was born in Kuala Lumpur and migrated to Melbourne in 1969, is now a resident of Adelaide and one of Australia's most famous master chefs. Although retired, Cheong Liew continues to give master classes and share his unique culinary style at events such as the annual Harvest Festival in McLaren Vale in the heart of the South Australian wine region. He is well remembered for his signature dish 'Four Dances of the Sea'—a multicultural affair, inspired by his Malaysian background, using Australia's high quality seafood.

Following in his footsteps are Adam Liaw and Poh Ling Yeow, both of whom became famous through television's *MasterChef Australia* competition. Adam and Poh now have their own cooking programs, *Destination Flavour* and *Poh & Co*, on SBS TV. And both still draw inspiration from their Malaysian heritage while relishing their Australian-ness. Poh, who is also a visual artist, reflects: 'When we arrived in Australia, I loved everything. I was just immediately besotted with this country.'<sup>24</sup> She also recalls that she found inspiration for her cooking career from Adelaide's Central Market, where her



2014 Winner of the Masak di Malaysia-Makan di Australia (Cook in Malaysia, Dine in Australia) Culinary Challenge, Lee Jen Kwok, with Head of Tourism Australia Country Manager Elaine Leong and Australian Senior Trade Commissioner Susan Kahwati.





Chef Adam Liaw (second from left) meets dinner guests Tunku Zain al-'Abidin ibni Tuanku Muhriz (left), Dato Yeoh Soo Min and her son.

family shopped for traditional Asian ingredients when they first arrived.<sup>25</sup> Adam is similarly completely at home in Australia but continues to embrace his Malaysian cultural identity. Born in George Town, Adam grew up an 'Aussie kid' but he believes that, as a chef, 'his diverse cultural heritage is splashed across the plate.'<sup>26</sup>

These three renowned Malaysian–Australian chefs share the curious power of the Adelaide–Penang Sister City connection. In fact, Adam Liaw reflects: 'I think it was actually that sister city relationship that made them [my parents] think "oh, we could go to Australia"—and a few years after I was born that's where we ended up.'<sup>27</sup> The Adelaide–Penang Sister City relationship is special, for though its roots are historical, it remains, in essence, social and cultural in its ongoing dynamism. Those cultural ties extend well beyond the culinary arts and can be found in partnerships of considerable diversity and substance that have blossomed since the 1950s.

## A Vibrant Tradition of Artistic Exchange

### *Nurturing the arts*

One memorable pioneer of the arts in Malaysia was Frank Sullivan, the Australian Press Secretary to Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman. Sullivan had a close, lifelong association with Malaysia that began during the Pacific War. He purchased his first painting in Singapore in 1946 and became so intrigued by the art of Malaya that, in 1952, he co-founded the Malayan Arts Council (MAC). In 1956, just prior to independence, the MAC successfully broached the idea of a National Art Gallery with the Tunku. Such was the Tunku's support for the gallery, it opened in 1958 in his residence where it remained until moving to its current location in 1984. Sullivan was indefatigable in the realisation and promotion of the gallery, as Secretary of the first Working Committee and then as a member of the Board of Trustees, a position he held until 1971.

Further promoting modern Malaysian artists, Frank Sullivan opened the Samat Gallery, Malaysia's first commercial gallery for contemporary art in 1967 with the support of Tan Sri PG Lim, distinguished lawyer, Malaysia's first female diplomat and fellow patron of the arts.<sup>28</sup> This spirit of artistic partnership has been sustained over the 60 years of our diplomatic engagement. Many Australians, like Sullivan, have contributed to a reputation for promoting and supporting Malaysian culture and the arts and, as Neil Manton, former diplomat and connoisseur of Southeast Asian art, recounts, the Australian High Commission was at the centre of this activity.

Australian paintings went on display for the first time at the High Commission in November 1960, when Tom Critchley was High Commissioner, attracting distinguished guests including the Yang di Pertuan Agong and the Raja Permaisuri Agong. There were 16 paintings on display by some of Australia's most celebrated artists, including Sidney Nolan, Russell Drysdale, Lawrence Daws, Kenneth Jack, John Brack and Robert Dickerson, with Nolan's iconic

‘Ned Kelly, Outlaw’ attracting much attention.<sup>29</sup> Malaysian art first went on display in Australia in Sydney in 1965 and, in 1969, the first touring exhibition of Malaysian art travelled to Australia and New Zealand. Fifty artists were included, introducing Australians to the traditional art of the *wayang kulit*—the epic plays of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*—through to the most modern and adventurous painters of Malaysia’s flourishing 1960s art scene.

## THERE HAVE SINCE BEEN MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUSTRALIANS FROM EVERY PART OF THE COUNTRY TO APPRECIATE MALAYSIAN ART

There have since been many opportunities for Australians from every part of the country to appreciate Malaysian art. In 1999, for example, a special artistic collaboration was undertaken when Country Arts SA and the National Art Gallery of Malaysia brought artists from the remote Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara region of South Australia<sup>30</sup> together with artists from Sabah and Sarawak in East Malaysia. The results of their exchange of ideas around ‘the land, how we use it, [and] how we come to know it’ was exhibited around South Australia and Malaysia in 2000 and 2001.<sup>31</sup> More recently in 2014, the ‘Arts Kuala Lumpur—Melbourne’ exhibition displayed the work of 15 renowned Malaysian artists in the heart of Melbourne and in 2015, an exhibition of Southeast Asian art at the Australian National University’s School of Art Gallery featured a significant body of work by some of Malaysia’s best known artists.

### *‘Lavishing culture on Malaysia’*

Cultural curiosity was an enduring theme at the Australian High Commission on Jalan Yap Kwan Seng in the 1980s and 1990s. In reporting on the multiple visual exhibitions, seminars on playwriting, and musical performances being held in 1994, *The Canberra Times* effused ‘Australia lavishes culture

Neil Manton is a Canberra-based writer and art collector who is currently working on a major book, “Senilukis dari Malaysia – Art from Australia – a two way street”, a history of our cultural engagement with Malaysia since the 1960s.

Painting by Malaysian artist Redza Piyadasa, entitled *Neil's Family* (1990).



## Celebrating years of artistic collaborations

In the 1980s, the Australian High Commission on Jalan Yap Kwan Seng—despite its concrete austerity—had one of the best exhibition spaces in Malaysia.

In 2002, the High Commission produced a publication, *menjejak kembali*, which recorded the major exhibitors of the previous twenty-year period. The compilation is a valuable record



of Australia's involvement with Malaysia and its people at a very human level—an intimate cultural engagement which underpinned the overall bilateral relationship. Many of the artists who exhibited at the High Commission are among Malaysia's most important—Latiff Mohidin, Fauzan Omar, Khalil Ibrahim, Sharifa Fatima Syed Zubir, Tan Choon Ghee, Yeoh Jin Leng, Suleiman Esa, Long Thien Shih, Chang Fee Ming, Chew Fang Chin, Tajuddin Ismail, Yusof Ghani, Zeng Yuande and Anurendra Jegadeva.

Over the years, Australia hosted artists from all over Malaysia. There was a magnificent exhibition of Iban weaving from Sarawak which featured dancing and a demonstration by a weaver who produced a wonderful textile sitting on the floor in the High Commission's reception area. Then there were the exhibitions from groups such as the Malaysian Watercolour Society, the Malaysian Artists Association and the Utara Group. These 'shows' drew a wide audience so the impact the High Commission had locally was greater and the publicity was a valuable tool in our public diplomacy efforts.

Opening nights were wonderfully bright occasions with batiks and colourful silks lighting up the evening and animated conversations filling the space as we viewed the works on display and talked with the artists themselves. Press coverage was good with the High Commission praised for its support of local cultural product and producers.

As part of an exhibition we also hosted artist talks and opened on the weekends so that school groups might come in to engage with the artists and the paintings. Particularly rewarding was that most exhibitions would be opened by local dignitaries up to Cabinet Minister level, which gave staff opportunities for informal political contact. Such was the High Commission's profile for its support for Malaysian art that even in difficult political times, Ministers still came to perform the opening ceremony.

The High Commission also played host to Australian touring exhibitions. One such exhibition was by Melbourne-based artist Yao Di-Xiong, whose 100 metre long painting, 'Hundred Kangaroos' (seratus kanggaru), was painted on panels. I was astonished on meeting him at the airport to find all the panels rolled up and stowed in one big bag which we lugged back to the High Commission before getting a small army of volunteers to blu-tack them on the walls. The effect was wonderful until the air conditioners were turned on the next morning blowing most of the panels on the floor! More blu-tack needed!

A feature of this visit was Yao's workshops with local artists which were highly successful cultural exchanges. I will never forget the scene in our space with dozens of artists dashing off quick images of local birds and animals, trees and shrubs in Chinese ink. Yao's exchange was repeated in Sarawak with local artists and an enthusiastic audience, delighted at his efforts to paint the local native symbol, the kenyalang or hornbill.

During my time in Kuala Lumpur I felt that these personal exchanges were the most important feature of the High Commission's public diplomacy program. Such exchanges led to long-term friendships and a continued cross-cultural understanding. I am very pleased that, though the High Commission is no longer home to those art exhibitions, artist-in-residence programs are strongly promoted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through Asialink. Our diplomatic commitments continue to strengthen our relations with a valued neighbour in Southeast Asia.

on Malaysia.<sup>32</sup> That year the High Commission hosted Malaysia's first Fringe Festival—named 'Do You Like My Fringe?'—featuring drama workshops and plays. It was also reported that the National Language Authority of Malaysia had initiated the translation of Australia's Blinky Bill children's stories for screening on Malaysian television.<sup>33</sup>

The 1990s was an inspired decade for the arts. In 1991, Asialink sent its first artists to Malaysia under its Arts Residencies program. It has since facilitated over 45 artist residencies across Malaysia—from Kuala Lumpur to Kuching—with considerable support from the AMI, the High Commission, and many arts bodies in Australia and Malaysia.<sup>34</sup> A rich diversity of artists have sought inspiration from Malaysia—sculptors and jewellers, architects and theatre directors, poets and playwrights, jazz and opera singers.

These burgeoning ties have continued in the 21st Century. In 2015, two artists were selected for the Malaysian Arts Residency. Suzanne Howard, an interdisciplinary artist, went to Cherrycake Studios in George Town to develop 'large-scale video installations exploring place, architecture and cultural traditions' and Omar Musa, a Malaysian–Australian author and poet, splitting his residency between Rimbun Dahan in Kuang and Hotel Penaga in George Town, worked on a novel combining 'Malay myths and ghost stories with hard-edged observations of politics, gender, history and religion.'<sup>35</sup>

Rimbun Dahan and the heritage arts Hotel Penaga form part of the Hijjas family's arts residencies program in Malaysia. In parallel with Asialink, these began in 1994. Hijjas Kasturi, architect and conservationist, studied in Australia as a Colombo Plan student in 1958. The arts residencies, he says, are 'his way of paying something back to both countries.'<sup>36</sup> He and his Australian wife Angela support Australian and Malaysian artists to develop and exhibit their work. Australian artists spend a year-long residency at Rimbun Dahan which, as well as being the Hijjas family home, is a centre for developing







Asialink Arts Residents in Malaysia, Caitlin Mackenzie and Gabriel Comeford at Rimbun Dahan, 2013.





**Professor Philip Cox, AO**  
**Architect and Planner**  
**Cox Architecture**

Malaysia has emerged in Southeast Asia as one of the most progressive nations with close ties to Australia particularly in education and service industries.

As an emerging nation on the most southern tip of the great Eurasia land mass, it represents unlimited opportunities—culturally, politically and economically. It is only in recent times that Australia has seen itself as part of Southeast Asia and as a consequence there is an increasing exchange between the two nations.

We were involved in the early planning of Iskandar in Johor, master-planning the second crossing and establishing urban development between the two links. This was mainly under the direction of UEM and Renong and has proved to be of great success and now part of Pemandu, the Malaysian Government economic plan for Malaysia in the development of Iskandar.

I have had the experience of being on the Board of UEM Sunrise Berhad, substantially owned by Khazanah, and involved in the investment and the development of property throughout Malaysia, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

Working mainly as a consulting architect and planner in Malaysia we have worked with some of the most important companies, including IOI Group, Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad, Sime Darby and many others in planning and development in Malaysia.

We were also involved in designing the KLCC Convention and Exhibition Centre, its twin towers providing a centrepiece for central Kuala Lumpur. Most recently, planning Kuching and the northern expansion of the city and parliamentary zone has been exciting, as has the planning of the Sibu Waterfront.

Working with Malaysians has been an enjoyable experience, especially in our cultural interchange. Malaysia possesses such a rich heritage in the visual and performing arts that provide a source of fascination to Australians. Australian culture, although relatively new, can return with a vigour and different interpretation and inspiration of western culture that is appealing.

With common language and early Colonial British history there remain common bonds that provide cultural and planning strategies for both countries to explore and develop.

traditional and contemporary art forms.<sup>37</sup> The centre is also home to a permanent collection made up entirely of works by former resident artists. To complete the two-way exchange, the Hijjas family is developing a site in Horsham, in the Wimmera region of Victoria, where Malaysian artists will spend three months submerged in their artistic practice.<sup>38</sup>

Exciting collaborations continue to be forged between artistic communities in Australia and Malaysia. In August 2015, the George Town Festival and the Adelaide OzAsia Festival signed an MOU to collaborate over three years. In the same month, Australian artist Abdul-Rahman Abdullah participated in a two-week residency program at Gallery Petronas in Malaysia as part of a two-way exchange with the Islamic Museum of Australia.

#### *Our stories on film*

Although interactions in filmmaking have been modest, our efforts to share our stories through film go back to the 1950s. In 1956, Australian High Commissioner Critchley presented the Federation of Malaya with a batch of Australian films, bringing the collection held in Malaya to 170 films made by the Australian News and Information Bureau. The bureau had been created in 1950, primarily to promote Australia to potential migrants after the war, but it also played an important role acquainting post-colonial Asia with Australia. The films were loaned to students free of charge, but were also included in the repertoire of the Malayan Department of Information's mobile cinema service. It was estimated that the 93 mobile cinemas reached an audience exceeding 10 million each year.<sup>39</sup>

From those humble beginnings, our cinematic connection entered new and exciting territory in 2014, when Malaysia joined a growing network of countries hosting the Tropfest Short Film Festival—the world's largest short film festival. Tropfest began modestly in a Sydney café in 1993 as an avenue for small budget films 'about our stories for our people', opening filmmaking



Malaysian author Kemala at Australian National Playwrights Conference – Canberra, 1975.



**Datuk Dr Philip Ting,  
Honorary Consul of  
Australia in Kuching**

My love affair with Australia started some 45 years ago when as a poor kampung boy I was given the chance to study in Australia for free. I jumped at the opportunity. With the meagre savings from my parents and the proceeds of their pawned wedding rings and jewellery, I embarked on the journey of a lifetime. Australia delivered on its promise, and more. It gave me through education a ticket to a better life, one that I could only have dreamt about, and friendships which have lasted a lifetime.

There was the lecturer who offered a helping hand with assignments and made me a part of his family. Another kindly offered me longer exam times because of my poor command of English (I declined). Most of all I remember the love of my adopted 'Aussie Mum', Mrs Joan Buchanan. I was welcomed into her home and raised as the 'fourth son'. I remember fondly the bland 'meat and three veg' meals and 'fish and the same three veg' on Fridays. How things in Australia have changed! Many of us who studied in Australia in the sixties and seventies still remember those wonderful Australians who played such important roles in our lives. Those unsung heroes and heroines were instrumental in laying the foundation of our 60 year strong bilateral relationship.

Seventeen years ago, I jumped at the opportunity to repay the kindness of Australia and my alma mater Swinburne University when I was approached to help establish Swinburne University in my adopted hometown of Kuching. Today, it is a thriving university with 4000 students from 60 countries, all of whom will graduate with an Australian quality education.

It has been an honour to serve Australia as the Honorary Consul in Kuching for the last 24 years. A role I find very fulfilling as it gives me the opportunity to provide assistance to Australians living in or passing through Sarawak. Extending a helping hand to Australians in need is my way of repaying Australia for the love and helping hand I received some 45 years ago.

up to anyone with a story and a camera. The managing director of Tropfest Southeast Asia, Joe Sidek, is also director of the George Town Festival in Penang.<sup>40</sup>

## Sharing Our Sporting Traditions

### *Friendships forged over golf and cricket*

Australians and Malaysians have always come together over sport. The game of golf, in particular, has long featured in the diplomatic and business worlds, and this was especially the case throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Several of Malaysia's most senior ministers, including Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, had a passion for golf, and enjoyed using the agreeable atmosphere of the golf course to discuss ideas and issues.<sup>41</sup> Secretary of the Malaysian Foreign Ministry, Tan Sri Haji Mohammed Ghazali Shafie was also a keen golfer and, indicative of the diplomatic informality of the 1960s, would comfortably partner a relatively junior Australian diplomat at Royal Selangor. Australia's diplomats in Malaysia happily adjusted to this style of diplomacy and, indeed, High Commissioner Critchley's last days in Kuala Lumpur in 1965 were said to have been marked by two days of golf with Malaysian colleagues and friends.<sup>42</sup>

Although cricket did not attach itself to Malaysia to the extent that it did elsewhere in the Commonwealth, for a brief time it was a shared pleasure that cemented Australian and Malaysian friendships. In the early 1970s, young diplomats from India, Sri Lanka, Britain, New Zealand and Australia formed teams that played against teams put together by the Malaysian Police, the Planters' Association and the Malaysian Army. There was such enthusiasm for the cricket round robin that the Sultan of Selangor offered to host the first match at his palace and provided a banquet for the players after the game.<sup>43</sup> Diplomatic and corporate games of golf are now more likely to be played than cricket, but many Malaysians remain passionate about the sport and the Malaysian National Cricket Team has competed at international level since 1967.



A game of golf at the 24th ASEAN Ministers Meeting with (from left) US Secretary of State James Baker, Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, Singapore Foreign Minister Wong Kan Seng and Malaysian Foreign Minister Tun Abdullah Badawi, 1991.





**Dr Imran K. Lum**  
Associate Director  
National Australia Bank  
Australia-ASEAN Council  
Board Member

I was never meant to be in Australia. My parents left for Australia in 1975 as budding young medical students, intending to do their internship for a few years and then head back to Malaysia. The decision to come to Australia was largely driven by an Australian English teacher named Rachel who taught in my mum's kampung. One of the things she taught was a song about an Australian farm, which was catchy enough to make my mum wish to live on a farm.

When the opportunity to further their studies in Australia came up, mum seized the chance to fulfil her dream of living on a farm. They bought 10 acres in McLaren Vale, South Australia, although being a kampung girl, mum had no idea about farming. When the only animals they were successful at breeding were snakes, mum decided to pack it in and balik kampung—return to the village. Unfortunately for her, my dad had fallen in love with Australia and decided to stay.

Reluctantly, mum had my two sisters and me in Australia but she was adamant we retain our connection with Malaysia. One way of achieving this was to give us two names to reflect our mixed Malay and Chinese heritage. Our mixed background gave us insights into Malaysian society. My mum grew up in a small Malay kampung called Air Barok near Malacca and my dad grew up in Kajang in a hardworking Chinese Methodist family. They met just after the 1969 riots and although the socio-political climate suggested that there would be some Romeo-Juliet type drama, their marriage was largely uneventful. The fact that they were different races was spectacularly irrelevant.

To a large extent, this epitomises my experiences of Malaysians. Despite very different cultures and perspectives, a prevailing boleh-lah – can do – attitude seems to rise above their differences. I always look to my family as a microcosm of what's going on in Malaysian society. Seeing how they interact, despite being of different faiths, languages and cultures gives me great hope for the future.

### *The Melbourne Cup: The race that stops a nation*

For many Australians and Malaysians, horseracing, and the Melbourne Cup in particular, hold a special place in our sporting story. In 1955, as our formal trade and diplomatic relations began to develop, Australia exported a modest 12 race horses to Malaya.<sup>44</sup> Sixty years later this market has grown considerably with 1395 thoroughbred horses imported between 2003 and 2013. Increased interest in the sport may well have arisen following Tunku Abdul Rahman's attendance at the Melbourne Cup, during his 1959 official visit to Australia, where he thoroughly enjoyed the 'carnival atmosphere and the sporting and social importance of horseracing Down Under'.<sup>45</sup> Today, Malaysia's most famous racing enthusiast must be businessman Dato' Tan Chin Nam, the only Asian to have won the Melbourne Cup—four times. Teaming up with renowned Australian trainer Bart Cummings, Dato' Tan won his first Cup in 1974 with 'Think Big'. Remarkably, he repeated his success with the same horse, by then jointly owned by the Tunku, the following year. Dato' Tan fondly recalls the Tunku being completely overwhelmed when accepting the Cup.<sup>46</sup> Dato' Tan went on to win his third Melbourne Cup in 1996 with 'Saintly' and his fourth in 2008 with 'Viewed'. In a lasting tribute to our horseracing links, in 1995, Tunku Shahabuddin and Peter Lawrence established the Melbourne Racing Club Trophy run each year at Selangor Turf Club's International Racing Carnival.

### *Expats take to the sporting fields*

As well as sharing passions for golf and horseracing, Australian expats in Malaysia naturally gravitate towards, and are keen to share, their own sporting codes away from home. In February 1957, the first game of Australian Rules football, between teams from RAAF No. 10 Bomber Squadron and 2nd battalion, Royal Australian Army Regiment, was played before a crowd of around 1000 in Kuala Lumpur.<sup>47</sup> It was not until the 1980s that Australian expats formed their own AFL (Australian Football League) team, the 'Malaysian Warriors', who now compete around the region as part of AFL



Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman and Think Big, Melbourne Cup winner, 1975.

Asia. AFL Asia has also introduced its junior Auskick program which is open to all children in Malaysia aged 5 to 12. For Australian AFL fans, and curious Malaysians, 'Aussie rules' can also be seen on Australia Plus Television's *Sports Lounge* which broadcasts AFL games into Malaysia.

Rugby Union also has a loyal following in Malaysia, which is the birthplace of what has become the world's premier rugby 10s annual tournament, the COBRA 10s. The first COBRA—Combined Old Boys' Rugby Association—match was held in Kuala Lumpur in 1967 and was played among local teams and expats. Australian Army servicemen while stationed in Malaysia soon became involved and other Australian teams have been a part of the COBRA 10s competition from the early 1970s. Since the COBRA 10s became a fully international tournament in 1992, it has grown to include 16 international teams. The honours have been shared among New Zealand, Samoa, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Fiji, as well as Malaysia and Australia—with Malaysian teams currently ahead of the Australians. Hockey is also widely played in Australia and Malaysia. In 2015 Malaysia's national hockey team was in Perth for practice games against the Australian men's team, the Kookaburras, and both countries play in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup.<sup>48</sup>



Malaysia playing Australia in hockey at the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games.

Malaysians are accomplished athletes and expats and students in Australia are also well organised around their favourite sports away from home. Each year they take to the athletics fields for the Malaysian Games, which are a precursor to the Malaysian Students Council of Australia's annual National Conference and Games. Others are especially active in netball and badminton—the sport that has brought Malaysia much international success. One of Malaysia's best known badminton champions, Ong Beng Teong, gold medallist at the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, is now a resident of Melbourne. After retiring, Ong trained to be a coach with the Badminton Association of Malaysia and, after coaching students in Selangor for many years, he established the Pro Badminton Academy (PBA). PBA has now expanded with



**Rechelle Hawkes, OAM**  
**Former Captain of Australia's**  
**Women's Hockey Team and**  
**Former Australia–Malaysia**  
**Institute Board Member**

This year not only celebrates 60 years of Australia–Malaysia diplomacy, but also the tenth anniversary of the Australia–Malaysia Institute (AMI), funded by the Australian Government, and supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). I am pleased to have had the opportunity to be an AMI Advisory Board Member for the past six years.

The AMI was established in 2005 with the aim of strengthening people-to-people and institutional links and to develop and deepen mutual understanding between the two countries.

A part of my role on the AMI Board was to assist with identifying programs which could add real benefit to the development of relations between Malaysia and Australia. With a history in sport, having represented the Australian Women's Hockey Team for 15 years and represented Australia at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in 1998, this was a perfect fit for me. I was able to offer advice on developing sports programs, which could be mutually beneficial to both countries.

In 2010-11 the AMI funded three elite sports coaching scholarship programs, selecting three Malaysian coaches—from hockey, swimming and cycling—to spend time in Australia developing their skills in an elite training environment. These programs proved successful and assisted in establishing relationships between the Australian and Malaysian National Associations to continue further development in the coaching area.

Another important initiative was the Jom Pi Jaring Netball Program, modelled on the successful Australian, “Net, Set, Go!” program. Netball Australia sent coaches to Malaysia to assist in developing the skills required to enable Malaysian Netball to establish 11 pilot programs in schools to develop the netball skills of children aged between 5 and 8.

This was a wonderful opportunity to use some of the knowledge I had gathered during the Commonwealth Games in Malaysia in 1998, which guided me in determining what sports program might be beneficial to both our countries. My experiences in Kuala Lumpur have been extremely rewarding from a sporting perspective, but have also given me insights into an extraordinary range of cultural activities and showcased the immense beauty of such a wonderful country.



academies in Malaysia and Australia, where the courts are fully booked from the moment the doors open each day.<sup>49</sup>

The AMI continued to play a special role in nurturing Australia's sporting ties with Malaysia between 2005 and 2015 supporting cycling, hockey, swimming, netball, and surf lifesaving activities. Joint training initiatives between Netball Australia and the Malaysian Netball Association provide mentoring and coaching programs for athletes, and education in sports psychology, nutrition and sports medicine. Surf Life Saving Australia also worked with the AMI and, in 2012–13, collaborated with the Life Saving Society of Malaysia on techniques for drowning prevention as well as coaching. A highlight for the Australia–Malaysia sporting relationship was the choice of Kuala Lumpur as the venue for the Australian swimming team to complete its final training programs in preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Sharing our love of sport has become a natural fit for Australians and Malaysians and, as with the arts, a spirit of enthusiasm and mutual curiosity has provided the impetus for an expanding range of pursuits. With so many Malaysians and Australians crossing paths as tourists and migrants, or in galleries, cinemas and at sports venues, the possibilities for future collaboration are limitless.





Australian Natalie Grinham plays Malaysian Datuk Nicol David at the 2006 Women's Squash Championship.



**Azizul Awang**  
Malaysian Track Cyclist

I came to Australia in late 2007 after stepping up into the National Sports Council of Malaysia's elite cycling program. This was an opportunity I had been waiting for since I was in the junior development squad. Moving from Malaysia to Australia was a really big decision in my life as I had to leave my hometown, family and friends, and my culture. However, I really wanted to become a professional cyclist and an Olympic Champion, so I had to leave my comfort zone and made this wise decision.

My career has progressed tremendously since I started training with my Aussie coach, John Beasley. He has taught me every single training component I need to become a world class track cyclist. I'm also working with some other great local people, such as my strength and conditioning coach, Martyn Girvan, and my psychologist, Dave Williams. Their experience and knowledge has driven my career forward.

The opportunity to train in Australia has given me a lot of valuable experiences. Australia is, indeed, the best place to train and gain sports knowledge, particularly in cycling. I feel so lucky to be based in Melbourne as I can sometimes join training sessions with the Victorian Institute of Sport. They have treated me like a local and we have exchanged a lot of ideas, experiences and even culture. The Malaysian track cycling team also participates in local races around Australia, along with top Australian cyclists, and this really helps me learn more about racing craft and takes my performance to the next level.

I believe my years in Australia have afforded me a very intimate view that I can share with my fellow Malaysians. I still remember one competition, when there were no Malaysian supporters present, but I could hear Australians were cheering for me. This illustrates the warmth of the connection between Australia and Malaysia and I really feel that Australia is now my second home.



## CONCLUSION

This 60th anniversary year gives us a moment to reflect on our past achievements and look forward to our future collaborations. It is an opportunity to take stock of the depth and breadth of the relationship, and how it has grown as our dynamic region has evolved.

In 1955, Malaya was not yet independent; the concept of Malaysia not yet formed. A communist insurgency was troubling the region. Trade between our two countries was modest, focused on commodities. A few hundred young Malaysians had studied in Australia.

Building on the shared ordeal of the war in the Pacific, the foundations for the relationship we have today were laid in our first decade of formal relations. Both countries had a vision, not only for what the security and economic relationship might deliver, but how we might best cement our friendship and build cultural understanding. Opening reciprocal diplomatic missions in 1955 and 1956 was a recognition that we were each worth knowing, understanding and collaborating with. From that point, each country would play an important role in our future prosperity and strategic environment.

THIS 60TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR  
GIVES US A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON OUR  
PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO OUR  
FUTURE COLLABORATIONS

Early representatives like Dato' Gunn Lay Teik in Canberra and his counterpart Tom Critchley in Kuala Lumpur displayed an indefatigable enthusiasm for promoting the Australia–Malaysia relationship. These early days were also the beginning of a tradition of prime ministerial visits that



were marked by an amicable rapport. In 1959, Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman visited Australia, and Sir Robert Menzies visited Malaya. Every Australian prime minister since has visited Malaysia, and every Malaysian prime minister has reciprocated. Today, such visits continue to strengthen the relationship, enhance political engagement at the highest level and build common agendas.

Our long-standing security partnerships, which have evolved since World War II and reflect the bond established by the shared ordeal of the Malayan Campaign and Sandakan, sustain our ongoing engagement. This is evident in the resilience of the Five Power Defence Arrangements, which continue to foster close cooperation between Australia and Malaysia, and in the durable working relationship that was mobilised into action during the aftermath of the MH370 and MH17 tragedies in 2014. The network of security arrangements and cooperation on transnational crime between our two countries provides a solid foundation for meeting future contingencies in areas of ongoing risk, such as people smuggling and trafficking, health pandemics or challenges around terrorism and cyber security.

The expanding web of regional collaboration assists countries in the region to manage issues that have become increasingly complex in the twenty-first century. ASEAN is at the centre of many such initiatives. Australia's recently elevated relationship with ASEAN – now a strategic partnership – recognises Australia's contribution to the region and a convergence of interests with Malaysia and others on a broad range of issues. Australia continues to make significant investments towards encouraging economic growth in ASEAN members as well as assisting the realisation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Australia and Malaysia are actively involved in many regional partnerships and forums, including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) founded in 1994, the East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2005, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meetings Plus (ADMM-Plus) in 2010, as well



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There are very few ways to objectively evaluate the health of relationships between countries. Growing trade, investment and tourism flows offer useful pointers but can still be way off the mark. China, for example, is Japan's largest trading partner but one can hardly describe their relationship as warm. (This is sometimes referred to as the Asian Paradox although it hard to say what is uniquely Asian about it.)

Governments rarely want to lock themselves in a corner and admit that a particular relationship is bad, preferring to leave that to the media and analysts. The latter tend to focus on specific issues, usually troubling ones, on which to base their assessments. It is more common for governments, at least in East Asia, to speak of 'special' relationships and comprehensive partnerships. What attributes make these relationships special or comprehensive can also be a mystery.

Of the more than 190 relationships that Malaysia has, its relationship with Australia can objectively be considered special. Australians were integral to the defence and security of Malaya during the Second World War (1941-45), the subsequent Communist insurgency (1950-60) and the Indonesian Confrontation (1963-66). Australia even helped draft the 1957 Federal Constitution and sponsored Malaya's entry into the United Nations in that same year.

No other country can claim to have to have been as intimately involved in the birthing of the Malaysian nation. Not only do security ties continue to this day but the fact that with the possible exception of the United Kingdom no foreign country has educated more Malaysians makes the case for a special relationship stronger.

Time has, of course, dimmed and, in some cases, snuffed out memories. With each passing generation, relatively fewer Malaysians know Australia in the way that previous ones did. Pausing to hit the refresh button not only awakens sensibilities but reminds that the Australian-Malaysian relationship is a specially longstanding and vibrant one.

as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) launched in 1989. This firm commitment to regional diplomacy signifies a shared commitment to dialogue, peaceful resolution of disputes and economic liberalisation and integration.

Our trade and investment ties have also blossomed over time, building on promising foundations. Malaya was one of the seven places visited by Australia's first diplomatic trade mission to Asia in 1934 and one of the first Asian countries with which we formalised trade arrangements after World War II. In the years after Malaysia's independence bilateral trade intensified and has seen rapid growth in recent years. Some 3600 Australian companies now export to Malaysia each year and more than 200 Australian companies are represented in Malaysia. We rank among each other's top ten trading partners.

## WHEN REFLECTING ON THE EXTENT OF PAST AND PRESENT COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES: “OUR BEST DAYS LIE AHEAD OF US”

Education has long been a pillar of the bilateral relationship. From the 1950s, thousands of Malaysian students studied in Australia under the Colombo Plan. Annual enrolments in Australian educational institutions have increased by thousands in the decades since, with some 90 000 Malaysian students having studied in Australian educational institutions since 2002. The launch of the New Colombo Plan in Malaysia in 2015 marked a new phase of our education relationship and will see more Australian students forming lasting people-to-people links through study and internships.

Outside of education, Malaysians and Australians have formed personal connections through business, tourism, migration, the arts and sport. This dynamic web of people-to-people contacts enlivens and deepens our bilateral relationship. These friendships help us to understand and celebrate each other's cultures and perspectives. They also build strength, resilience and mutual trust that enables us to resolve differences in a constructive and cooperative manner.

When Australia's first Commission was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1955, our common links were empire, geography and a commitment to democracy.

Sixty years on, we are partners in a dynamic, multi-faceted relationship founded on common interests, mutual respect and a shared stake in the security and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region.

Our cooperation over six decades and more has laid the foundations for a relationship that stands to be even more successful, dynamic and prosperous in the future. As Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said in a recent speech in Kuala Lumpur when reflecting on the extent of past and present cooperation between our two countries: "our best days lie ahead of us."<sup>1</sup>







**HE Mr Zainal Abidin Ahmad**  
High Commission of Malaysia  
Canberra

Malaysia-Australia relations can be traced way back when Malaya was under British rule. The Australian Commission was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1955 and in turn Malaya established its Commission in Canberra in August 1956 in anticipation of the independence of the Federation of Malaya in 1957. Australia also supported the formation of Malaysia in 1963.

I am pleased to note that since then, relations between Malaysia and Australia have gone from strength to strength with regular visits between leaders of the two countries at various levels. Besides strong relations in the political sphere, cooperation in trade and investment, security and defence, education and tourism, and in social and cultural relations have been increasingly positive over the years. Since 1971, more than 35 bilateral agreements between both countries have been signed in those sectors including the Malaysia-Australia Free Trade Agreement that entered into force on 1 January 2013.

The establishment of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) in 1971 (comprising Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, the United Kingdom and New Zealand) has contributed to the promotion of peace in the region. Australia, as ASEAN's very first Dialogue Partner in 1974, has also played a significant role in the positive development of the organization and its contribution to regional stability.

Our bilateral trade has increased steadily from year to year and in 2014, reached RM53.20 billion (USD18 billion). As of 2013, Malaysia's cumulative investment in Australia registered at USD7.44 billion (RM23.04 billion). Cooperation in education has also been very strong since the early years as many Malaysians benefited from the Colombo Plan. In 2014 there were about 22 071 Malaysian students in Australia and now, under the New Colombo Plan, we look forward to seeing many Australians going to Malaysia to pursue their studies.

Malaysia's long historical ties with Australia have also contributed to close people-to-people contacts. In 2014, for example, more than half a million tourists from Australia visited Malaysia and more than 240 000 Malaysians visited Australia. Furthermore, since the launch of the Malaysia My Second Home Programme in 2002, a total of 615 Australians have taken up residence in Malaysia.

Malaysia continues to work closely with Australia in dealing with the double tragedies that struck Malaysia Airlines in 2014, losing both MH370 and MH17 aircrafts. Malaysia is appreciative that Australia takes the lead in the search operations for MH370 and is actively involved in the investigation of the MH17 incident.

I am confident that future Malaysia-Australia relations will be further enhanced for our mutual benefit. With the establishment of an ASEAN Economic Community by the end of 2015 under the chairmanship of Malaysia, both countries should work together to seize the opportunities available in ASEAN which would be one big market of more than 600 million people by then.



**HE Mr Rod Smith PSM**  
**Australian High**  
**Commissioner**  
**Kuala Lumpur**

As this book illustrates, the rich history of Australia-Malaysia ties is told through countless stories of discovery, friendship, sacrifice, partnership and shared endeavour. Each has made a contribution to the multi-dimensional relationship our two countries enjoy today.

It is testament to the efforts of many people — statesmen, diplomats, soldiers, businesspeople, academics, teachers, students, artists, journalists, athletes and others — that our relationship has such warmth, depth and diversity.

What will the Australia-Malaysia relationship look like in another twenty, forty or sixty years? The potential and the possibilities are endless. But we can point to some key markers that bode well for our future together.

Like never before, our security and prosperity are linked to the stability and growth of the world's most dynamic region, the Indo-Pacific. Our long history of defence and security cooperation, and our shared commitment to robust and inclusive regional architecture centred on ASEAN, prepare us to deal confidently with the challenges ahead.

Already we are top ten trading partners, but we have only seen the beginning of the opportunities that regional economic growth and integration will generate. Building on the gains of MAFTA and AANZFTA, new agreements like TPP and RCEP promise to be transformational, leveraging our competitive strengths and driving new forms of business engagement that will deliver greater prosperity to both countries.

Perhaps most importantly, the intricate web of people-to-people links — nurtured over the last sixty years through migration, education, business, tourism, the arts, sport and countless personal friendships — will continue to flourish.

The impressive tide of Malaysian students living and studying in Australia, sparked initially by the Colombo Plan, is now turning towards Malaysia too, with young Australians supported by the New Colombo Plan eager to live, study and work in Malaysia. A new generation of young Australians and Malaysians will deepen mutual understanding, harness technology and drive innovation to connect us more than ever before.

This anniversary year, as we look back with satisfaction at how far we have come over sixty years, we also look ahead to what more we can do together. We do so with confidence that the bonds of friendship will strengthen further and we will achieve even greater success in the future.



Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and High Commissioner Rod Smith with staff at the Australian High Commission Kuala Lumpur, 2015.





## ENDNOTES

### INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup> For the importance of Malaya/Malaysia to Australia in the postwar era, see Peter Edwards with Gregory Pemberton (1992), *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial).

<sup>2</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) (2014), *Australia's Trade at a Glance*, (Canberra: Australian Government), p. 26. See <http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/australias-trade-at-a-glance/> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Oakman (2010), *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan*, (Canberra: ANU E Press), p. 186.

<sup>4</sup> In 2014, 21 950 Malaysians were enrolled in Australian education institutions, across Higher Education, VET (Vocational Education and Training), Schools, ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) and Non-Award courses. See Australian Education International (AEI) (2015), International Student Data 2014, 'Basic pivot table 2011–2014' at <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>5</sup> These numbers are for calendar years, January to December. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1976), *Overseas Arrivals and Departures 1976*, Table 9: Australian Residents Departing – Short-term Movement, Reference 4.3, p. 7; ABS (2015), 3401.0 Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, Dec 2014, Table 9: Short-term Movement, Resident Departures – Selected Destinations: Original, (Canberra: ABS)—see <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3401.0Dec%202014?OpenDocument> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>6</sup> ABS (1976), *Overseas Arrivals and Departures 1976*, Table 8: Visitors Arriving – Short-term Movement, Reference 4.3, p. 6; ABS (2015), 3401.0 *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, Dec 2014*, Table 5: Short-term Movement, Visitor Arrivals – Selected

Countries of Residence: Original (Canberra: ABS)—see <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3401.0Dec%202014?OpenDocument> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>7</sup> Peta Stephenson (2007), *The Outsider Within: Telling Australia's Indigenous-Australian History* (Sydney: UNSW Press), p. 22. See also Regina Gantner (2006), *Mixed Relations: Asian-Aboriginal Contact in North Australia*, (Perth: UWA Publishing); and Paul Battersby (2007), *To the Islands: White Australians and the Malay Archipelago since 1788*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books), p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Rita Camilleri (2001), *Attitudes and perceptions in Australia—Malaysia relations: a contemporary profile* (Bangi: Penterbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia), p. 19. Camilleri cites L. Williams (1993), 'Australia: the secret history', in *Good Weekend*, 2 October, pp. 1–16; and J. Ulry and M. Walsh (1981), 'The Lost Macassar Language of Northern Australia', in *Aboriginal History* (vol.1, pt 2), pp. 91–9.

<sup>9</sup> There were 496 Malays in Western Australia's pearling industry at that time, compared with 236 Japanese, 271 Filipinos, and 119 Aborigines. See the State Library of Western Australia, *Western Perspectives of a Nation*, 'The Sea: Pearling'—<http://slwa.wa.gov.au/wepon/sea/html/pearling.html> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>10</sup> Christine Lewis (2013), 'George Town connections', in *Trust News Australia*, (vol. 6, no. 5, November) pp. 26–7.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Commissioner in Malaya, Statement, Minister for External Affairs, RG Casey, 11 November 1955.

<sup>12</sup> Note that the Official Website of the High Commission of Malaysia, Canberra, refers to Malaysia's (Malaya's) first Commissioner to Australia as Dato' Nik Kamil Mahmood, while DFAT's Diplomatic List (1956–1962) refers to Dato Nik Ahmed Kamil CBE. I have used the Government of Malaysia's name for the first Commissioner. See [http://www.kln.gov.my/web/aus\\_canberra/n2007/-/asset\\_publisher/ME2g/blog/malaysia-australia-50-years-of-diplomatic-relations?redirect=%2Fweb%2Faus\\_canberra%2Fn2007](http://www.kln.gov.my/web/aus_canberra/n2007/-/asset_publisher/ME2g/blog/malaysia-australia-50-years-of-diplomatic-relations?redirect=%2Fweb%2Faus_canberra%2Fn2007) [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>13</sup> The Malayan Commissioner arrived in Canberra as Mr Gunn Lay Teik, receiving the royal title Dato' in mid-1958.

<sup>14</sup> News in Brief (1962), 'Aust. Ambassador to Marry', *The Canberra Times*, 27 July, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> No author (1965), 'Malaysia's progress—my most exciting experience, says Critchley' *The Straits Times*, 22 November, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Letter, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra to The Rt. Hon Sir Robert Menzies, 28 October 1965.

<sup>17</sup> Letter, RG Menzies to His Excellency Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, 18 November 1965.

<sup>18</sup> 'Malaysia's Progress', *The Straits Times*.

<sup>19</sup> Special Correspondent (1965), 'Replacing Mr Critchley: Transfer leaves diplomatic void', *The Canberra Times*, 17 November, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, p.178.

<sup>21</sup> Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, p.188.

<sup>22</sup> David Lee and Moreen Dee (2001), 'Southeast Asian Conflicts' in David Goldsworthy (ed.), *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press), p. 268.

<sup>23</sup> For the commemoration of Australia's relations with ASEAN, see Sally Percival Wood and Baogang He (2014), *The Australia–ASEAN Dialogue: Tracing 40 Years of Partnership*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

<sup>24</sup> See Seng Tan (2014), 'Hobnobbing with Giants: Australia's Approach to Asian Regionalism', in Percival Wood and He, *The Australia—ASEAN Dialogue*, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> Oakman, *Facing Asia*, p. 80.

<sup>26</sup> RJ Cameron (1975 and 1976), *Official Year Book of Australia*, (Canberra: ABS), p. 324.

<sup>27</sup> PwC–Melbourne Institute *Asialink Index 2013* (2014), (Asialink: The University of Melbourne), p. 21—<http://www.asialinkindex.com.au/2013/Investment.php> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

<sup>28</sup> DFAT (2014), Joint Media Statement, 'Malaysia Trade Ministers' Meeting', (Canberra: Australian Government), 13 August—[http://trademinister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2014/ar\\_mr\\_140813.aspx](http://trademinister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2014/ar_mr_140813.aspx) [Accessed 19 January 2015]

<sup>29</sup> DFAT's Malaysia Fact Sheet notes two-way investment stock in 2014 was \$26.2 billion.

<sup>30</sup> 'Mission statement', *The Australia—Malaysia Institute*, (Canberra: DFAT)—<http://www.dfat.gov.au/ami/charter.html> [Accessed 10 September 2015]

## CHAPTER 1

<sup>1</sup> Department of Defence (2013), 'Australia's International Defence Engagement: Southeast Asia', *Defence White Paper 2013*, (Canberra: Australian Government) Clause 6.32, p. 59. See <http://www.defence.gov.au/Whitepaper/default.asp> [Accessed 20 January 2015]

<sup>2</sup> Definition found in Eddie Walsh (2011), 'Non-traditional security threats in Asia: Finding a regional way forward' in *East Asia Forum*, 4 June. See <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/06/04/non-traditional-security-threats-in-asia-finding-a-regional-way-forward/> [Accessed 20 January 2015]

<sup>3</sup> 76 Australians were killed or wounded, and around 1000 Japanese casualties were inflicted in that battle. Joan Beaumont (1996), 'Australia's war: Asia and the Pacific', in J. Beaumont (ed) *Australia's War, 1939–45*, (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Beaumont, 'Australia's war', p. 27. See also Australian War Memorial (AWM) (2015) Research Centre, 'Military event: Malayan Campaign' <http://www.awm.gov.au/military-event/E407/> [Accessed 21 January 2015]

<sup>5</sup> Beaumont claims 14 per cent. (p. 27), however earlier sources claim 13 per cent. See Chris Coulthard-Clark (1998), 'Singapore', in *Where Australians Fought: The Encyclopaedia of Australian Battles*, (St Leonards: Allen & Unwin), p. 204. Coulthard-Clark takes his accounts of the Malayan Campaign from Lionel Wigmore (1957), *The Japanese Thrust*, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial).

<sup>6</sup> For an account of these battles, see Lim Choo Hoon (2002), 'The Battle of Pasir Panjang Revisited', in *Pointer*, Journal of the Singapore Armed Forces (Ministry of Defence Singapore: vol. 28 no.1: Jan–Mar).

<sup>7</sup> No author (1957), 'A general pays warm tribute to his Malay officers: Gen. Bruce arrives for Merdeka celebrations', *The Singapore Free Press*, 31 August.

<sup>8</sup> AWM (2015) 'General Information about Australian prisoners of the Japanese' at [http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/pow/general\\_info/](http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/pow/general_info/) [Accessed 21 January 2015] The number of Australian prisoners of war resulting from the Malayan Campaign is usually rather vaguely stated as 15 000. Beaumont provides a specific 15 395, (p. 27), while Coulthard-Clarke states '14 972 (including 1306 wounded) [were] taken prisoner', (p. 204). As the latter figures inflate the number to 16 278. Beaumont's estimate has been used.

<sup>9</sup> For these figures, see Lynette Ramsay Silver (2015), 'The Sandakan-Ranau Death Marches', at <http://lynettesilver.com/sandakan/the-death-marches/> [Accessed 21 January 2015]

<sup>10</sup> AWM, 'General Information'. See also, Behind the Wire – Australian Prisoners of War 1940–1945 (2015), Australia's War 1939–1945, 'the marches', at <http://www.w2australia.gov.au/behindwire/march.html> [Accessed 21 January 2015]

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Waters (2001), 'War, Decolonisation and Postwar Security', in David Goldsworthy (ed) *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press) p. 120.

<sup>12</sup> Statement made by Francis Stuart, Political Advisor, Australian Commission in Singapore, reported by Sunday Times Reporter (1950), 'Australia has no delusion on bandits', in *The Straits Times*, 21 May, p. 13.

<sup>13</sup> Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender (1950), International Affairs Statement, House of Representatives, (Commonwealth of Australia: Parliamentary Debates) 8 June, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Gifford (2001), 'The Cold War across Asia', in David Goldsworthy (ed), *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia*, (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press) p. 195.

<sup>15</sup> The fighters and bombers were to follow 12 to 18 months later. Australia's RAAF bomber deployment to the Malayan Emergency from 1950 had used Tengah airfield in Singapore. See Edwards, *Crises and Commitments*, p. 178.

<sup>16</sup> With the British withdrawal, under the FPDA, the Commonwealth forces with the FESR became the 28th ANZUK Brigade and the Australian battalion group moved from Terendak, to which they had relocated from Penang in October 1961, to Selarange Barracks Singapore, December 1969 to February 1970. The last battalion group was withdrawn from Singapore in February 1974.

<sup>17</sup> Malaysia identifies Merdeka (Independence) Day as 31 August 1957, but also celebrates Malaysia Day in recognition of 16 September 1963. Both are public holidays in Malaysia.

<sup>18</sup> Garry Barker (1963), 'Malaysia flag flies' *The Herald*, 17 September, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Rita Camilleri (2001), *Attitudes and perceptions in Australia–Malaysia relations: a contemporary profile*, (Bangi: Penterbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia), p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> Moreen Dee (2005), *Not a Matter for Negotiation: Australia's commitment to Malaysia 1961–1966*, (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia), pp. 11–12.

<sup>21</sup> Dee, *Not a Matter for Negotiation*, pp. 11–12.

<sup>22</sup> Dee, *Not a Matter for Negotiation*, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Dee, *Not a Matter for Negotiation*, p. 39.

<sup>24</sup> The Pingat Jasa Malaysia is offered to service personnel from Australia, Britain, New Zealand, Fiji, India and Nepal for their service during the periods of Malayan Emergency and Confrontation. More than 12 000 men and women have been identified as qualifying for the medal, and 8000 have received the award.

<sup>25</sup> As a young officer, Major General Jeffrey served in Malaya in 1962 and later in Sarawak, while seconded to a British SAS regiment, during *Konfrontasi*.

<sup>26</sup> No author (1970), 'Butterworth Takeover', *The Straits Times*, 2 April, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> See Joint Standing Committee (2007), *Australia's Relationship with Malaysia*, (Canberra: Australian Parliament), p. 22.

<sup>28</sup> No author (1988), 'Aussie Squadron Leaves for Home: assistances to Continue', *New Sunday Times*, 17 April, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Euan Graham (2014), 'FPDA—not fade away', *The Strategist* (Australian Strategic Policy Institute), 21 October, <http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/fpda-not-fade-away/> [Accessed 25 January 2015]

<sup>30</sup> See Royal Australian Navy (2015), 'Navy Today: Exercises', BERSAMA LIMA 2011 and BERSAMA SHIELD 2012 at <http://www.navy.gov.au/navy-today/exercises> [Accessed 25 January 2015]

<sup>31</sup> Tim Huxley (2012), 'The Future of the Five Power Defence Arrangements', *The Strategist* (Australian Strategic Policy Institute) 8



November) <http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-future-of-the-five-power-defence-arrangements/> [Accessed 25 January 2015]

<sup>32</sup> For example, the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, Australian Command and Staff College, Australian Defence Force Academy and the Royal Military College Duntroon.

<sup>33</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) (2003), *Annual Report: 2002-2003*, 1.1.12 South and South-East Asia (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia). See <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2002-2003/downloads/index.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>34</sup> For details, see the Joint Agency Coordination Centre at <http://www.jacc.gov.au/> [Accessed 25 January 2015]

<sup>35</sup> ABC News (2014), 'Malaysia Airlines MH370: Malaysian PM Najib Razak briefed on search efforts', 3 April at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-03/mh370-malaysian-pm-arrives-australia/5363394> [Accessed 20 January 2015]

<sup>36</sup> Numbers taken from Dutch Safety Board (2014), *Preliminary Report: Crash Involving Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777-200 flight MH17 (Hrabove, Ukraine, 17 July 2014)*, (The Hague: Dutch Safety Board) September, p. 12. The numbers come from the passports retrieved from MH17 passengers, though some passengers had dual nationality leading to different figures being quoted in the media.

<sup>37</sup> Prime Minister of Australia (2014), 'Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston to lead Australia's response to MH17 investigation and recovery efforts' 21 July—<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/2014-07-21/air-chief-marshal-angus-houston-lead-australias-response-mh17-investigation-and> [Accessed 20 January 2015]

## CHAPTER 2

<sup>1</sup> SR Carver, Acting Commonwealth Statistician (1956), 'Table X: Total Imports and Total Exports by Countries 1951-52 to 1955-56', in *Overseas Trade 1955-56*, Bulletin no.53, (Canberra: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics), p. 414. For the conversion—A£9 337 000 – A\$292 842 272 (as at 2013), see Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), 'Pre-Decimal Inflation Calculator', at <http://www.rba.gov.au/calculator/annualPreDecimal.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>2</sup> This amount comprises both merchandise exports (A\$5 473 000) and services exports (A\$1 766 000)—total A\$7 259 000. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (2015), 'Malaysia: Country Fact Sheet', (Canberra: DFAT).

<sup>3</sup> These figures represent investment stock and are taken from DFAT's Malaysia: Country Fact Sheet. Excludes some confidential items of trade.

<sup>4</sup> In the 1890s, Sinclair had been the Colony of Victoria's commercial trade representative in London.

<sup>5</sup> Boris Schedvin (2008), *Emissaries of Trade: A History of the Australian Trade Commissioner Service*, (Canberra: Austrade/DFAT), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Battersby (2007), *To the Islands: White Australians and the Malay Archipelago since 1788*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books), p. 112. See also John Reynolds, 'Jones, Sir Henry (1862-1926)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB)* (1983), vol. 9, (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, Australian National University (ANU))—<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/jones-sir-henry-6874/text11911> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>7</sup> James G. Cooper, 'Palfreyman Achalen Woolliscroft (1875-1967)', *ADB* (1988), vol. 11, (Canberra: National Centre of Biography, ANU)—<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/palfreyman-achalen-woolliscroft-7945/text13829> [Accessed 2 September 2015]. By the 1950s, Palfreyman controlled several of the ten Australian-owned tin-dredging mines in Malaysia. At the time, there were only 25 Western-owned tin dredging companies remaining on the Malay Peninsula.

<sup>8</sup> *Overseas Trade 1955-56*, p. 308.

<sup>9</sup> Holden Cars History (2015), at <http://www.classicholdencars.com/tag/history-of-holdens/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]; Graham Short (1957), 'Chrysler Royal: Not quite like U.S. model but it has its points', *The Straits Times*, 15 December, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> No author (1958), 'Trade Talks to Be Held with Malaya', *The Canberra Times*, 8 July, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Schedvin, *Emissaries of Trade*, p. 217.

<sup>12</sup> These figures are for the financial year 1965-66. KM Archer, Commonwealth Statistician (1966), 'No.22: Summary of Exports to Principal Countries 1961-62 to 1965-66', in *Overseas Trade 1965-66* Bulletin No.63 (Canberra: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and

Statistics), p. 867 and p. 844. Note that this amount only includes Singapore from 30 July 1965 to 30 September 1965. Note also, in February 1966, Australia's currency was decimalised, converting from the Australian pound to the Australian dollar. See RBA, 'Inflation Calculator' for today's equivalent, averaging \$612m in 2014 or \$597m in 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Rita Camilleri (2001), *Attitudes and perceptions in Australia—Malaysia relations: a contemporary profile* (Bangi: Penterbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) p.39.

<sup>14</sup> This was largely driven by the fact that Britain, traditionally Australia's largest trading partner, joined the European Economic Community (EEC), and Australia was forced to explore new trading relationships.

<sup>15</sup> John Funston (1995), 'Australia–Malaysia Relations: A Maturing Partnership', in Zaniah Marshallsay (ed.), *Australia–Malaysia Relations: New Roads Ahead*, (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute), p. 94.

<sup>16</sup> Australia Malaysia Business Council (2015), 'AMBC—Objectives', at <http://www.ambc.org.au/about-ambc/ambc-objectives/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>17</sup> No author (1972), 'SEA free trade forecast', *The Canberra Times*, 8 January, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Vietnam joined APEC in 1998, however the other more recent members of ASEAN, Burma, Cambodia and Laos are not. ASEAN is, nevertheless, an APEC Observer and this allows those states to participate in meetings and extends access to APEC documents and information.

<sup>19</sup> Anthony Milner and Sally Percival Wood (eds) (2012), *Our Place in the Asian Century: Southeast Asia as 'The Third Way'*, (Asialink: The University of Melbourne), p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> These figures represent 2013 data. See DFAT (2015), 'ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement' at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/aanzfta/Pages/asean-australia-new-zealand-free-trade-agreement.aspx> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>21</sup> The TPP builds upon the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (2006) that consists of Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore. There are currently 12 parties involved in the TPP which, as well as the four originating members, includes Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, the United States

and Vietnam. The RCEP is an ASEAN initiative that proposes an FTA comprising all ten ASEAN nations, plus their current FTA partners, which include Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea and New Zealand.

<sup>22</sup> Austrade (2015), 'Malaysia: Doing Business', at <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Export/Export-Markets/Countries/Malaysia/Doing-business#.VNHNx3n9nIU> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>23</sup> Department of Industry and Science (2015), 'Resources: Australian Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)', at <http://www.industry.gov.au/resource/UpstreamPetroleum/AustralianLiquefiedNaturalGas/Pages/default.aspx> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>24</sup> Austrade (2015), 'Malaysia seeks Australian oil and gas expertise', 11 February at <http://www.austrade.gov.au/News/Latest-from-Austrade/2015/malaysia-seeks-australian-oil-and-gas-expertise> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

## CHAPTER 3

<sup>1</sup> Federation of Malaya (1958), *Federation of Malaya Annual Report 1957*, (Kuala Lumpur: GR Smith, Government Printer), p. 263. In December 2014 there were 22 071 Malaysians enrolled in Australian education institutions. See Department of Education and Training (2015) *International Student Data 2014*, 'Table 7a: All Sector Year To Date Enrolments by Top 10 Nationalities by State/Territory for December 2014', (Canberra: Australian Government), at [https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/International-Student-Data/Pages/InternationalStudentData2014.aspx#Pivot\\_Table](https://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/International-Student-Data/Pages/InternationalStudentData2014.aspx#Pivot_Table) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Julia Gillard (no date), 'Shaping the Direction of our Bilateral Partnership', *Australia Malaysia: Forging Ahead*, at <http://www.australiamalaysia.com.au/en/features.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>3</sup> *Federation of Malaya Annual Report 1957*, pp. 244-5.

<sup>4</sup> VI Form was the equivalent of college education. *Federation of Malaya Annual Report 1957*, p. 262.

<sup>5</sup> In comparison, 660 Malaysian students went to the United

Kingdom in 1957 (223 government funded and 437 private); and 49 went to New Zealand (48 government funded and 1 private). *Federation of Malaya Annual Report 1957*, pp. 258–64.

<sup>6</sup> Page Research Centre (2013), 'Developing Policy: The Colombo Plan—A network for the future', Discussion Paper, (Canberra: Page Research Centre), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> The Universities of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia.

<sup>8</sup> In 1961 Monash University; 1964 Macquarie University and LaTrobe University; 1965 the University of Newcastle and the Queensland University of Technology; and 1966 Flinders University.

<sup>9</sup> Geoffrey Sauer (ed) (2001), *The Colombo Plan for Cooperation Economic Development in South and Southeast Asia 1951–2001: The Malaysian—Australian Perspective*, Australia Malaysia Cultural Foundation (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia), p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> Chai Hon Chan (1957), 'Students find it easy to earn that extra pocket money', *The New Straits Times*, 31 March, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Malaysian Student, Med II (unnamed) (1964), 'Fair Dinkum Asians', *Lot's Wife*, 8 July, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Welch (2014), 'Richer Relations? Four Decades of ASEAN–Australia Relations in Higher Education', in Sally Percival Wood and Baogang He (eds), *The Australia–ASEAN Dialogue: Tracing 40 Years of Partnership*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 153–4.

<sup>13</sup> See the Education Malaysia Australia website at [http://www.ema.org.au/v2/?page\\_id=309](http://www.ema.org.au/v2/?page_id=309) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>14</sup> See the Malaysian Students' Council of Australia website at <http://www.masca.org.au/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>15</sup> See Malaysia Festival '15 (2015), MFest 2015, at <http://www.malaysiafest.com.au/#s-home> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>16</sup> Welch, 'Richer Relations', p. 147.

<sup>17</sup> France was the first Associate Member, admitted in July 1973, followed by Australia and New Zealand in November 1973.

<sup>18</sup> Over the past 11 years, more than 7000 Taylor's College students have been placed in international universities—<http://college.taylors.edu.my/university-placement/university-listing> [Accessed 2 September 2015].

<sup>19</sup> Chairman's Statement, 9th East Asia Summit (2014), Education, Clause 15, 13 November. See <http://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/regional-architecture/eas/Pages/chairmans-statement-of-the-9th-east-asia-summit.aspx> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>20</sup> Hon Julie Bishop MP (2015), Australian High Commission Kuala Lumpur website, 'New Colombo Plan Launched in Malaysia', 7 August at [http://malaysia.highcommission.gov.au/klpr/media\\_ncp\\_msia\\_launch.html](http://malaysia.highcommission.gov.au/klpr/media_ncp_msia_launch.html) [Accessed 15 September]

<sup>21</sup> The RCA was established in 1972 and currently has 21 members in the Asia–Pacific. It was established under the auspices of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) for cooperation and coordination of research, development, and training projects in nuclear science and technology.

<sup>22</sup> Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (2013), *ANSTO Annual Report 2012–13*, (Lucas Heights, NSW: Australian Government), p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> CSIRO (2012), 'Petronas partnership to investigate alternative and clean energy technologies', 19 June at <http://www.csiro.au/Outcomes/Energy/Energy-from-oil-and-gas/Petronas.aspx> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>24</sup> DFAT (2007), *Australia's Relationship with Malaysia*, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia), pp. 8–9.

<sup>25</sup> K. C. Boey (1993), 'Monash sets up Malaysian studies centre', *New Straits Times*, 3 March.

<sup>26</sup> See Asia education Foundation, 'Curriculum Resources: Malaysia', at [http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/teachers/curriculum\\_resources/countries/malaysia\\_cr/malaysia\\_cr.html](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/teachers/curriculum_resources/countries/malaysia_cr/malaysia_cr.html) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>27</sup> The A2ELP was jointly convened by ISIS Malaysia, the St James Ethics Centre and Asialink from 2011 to 2013. In 2014 and 2015 ISIS Malaysia partnered with The Asia Foundation.

## CHAPTER 4

<sup>1</sup> For further information on MANZA, see <http://www.manza.org/about-manza/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>2</sup> Idris El Hhareir and Raane M'Baye (2011), *The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture: Volume Three—The Spread of Islam Throughout the World*, (Paris: UNESCO Publishing), pp. 840–1. The 'Cape Malay' community in Capetown, South Africa, was made up of Malays moved there by Dutch and British colonisers from the seventeenth century.

<sup>3</sup> The Dictionary of Sydney Trust (2012), *Dictionary of Sydney: Malaysians* at <http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/malaysians> [Accessed 2 September 2015]. The pearl diving industry received special exemption under the terms of Australia's *Immigration Restriction Act* introduced in 1901.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Immigration and Border Protection (2015), *Malaysia Country Profile*, at <https://www.border.gov.au/about/reports-publications/research-statistics/statistics/live-in-australia/country-profiles/malaysia> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>5</sup> Transcript, James Fox, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006), *Australia's relations with Malaysia*, Public Hearing, 9 October, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> *Dictionary of Sydney*.

<sup>7</sup> For information, see Malay Australian Association of New South Wales (MAAN) at <http://www.malay.org.au/index.htm> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>8</sup> Joyce Ng (2014), 'Building the first Malay Mosque in Melbourne to Strengthen Ties', *JOM Magazine*, 28 May, at <http://jommagazine.com.au/building-the-first-malay-mosque-in-melbourne-to-strengthen-ties/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>9</sup> AMI (2015), 'Muslim Leadership Program 2012: A program in interfaith dialogue and capacity building', (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) at <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/foundations-councils-institutes/australia-malaysia-institute/programs/pages/interfaith-program.aspx#mlp> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>10</sup> Frank Clune (1942), *Isles of Spice*, (New York: EP Dutton and Co. Inc.), p. 277.

<sup>11</sup> Yeng Ai Chun (2008), 'Fond Memories from ex-RAAF staff', *The Star Online*, 27 May at <http://bit.ly/1SnSau6> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>12</sup> RAAF Radio Butterworth is still fondly remembered through a Facebook group. See [https://www.facebook.com/pages/RAAF-Radio-Butterworth/189475601180250?sk=timeline&ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pages/RAAF-Radio-Butterworth/189475601180250?sk=timeline&ref=page_internal) [Accessed 2 September 2015]. There are also a number of sound clips from RRB on YouTube. Go to [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=raaf+radio+butterworth](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=raaf+radio+butterworth) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>13</sup> This number is for the 1975 calendar year. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1976) *Overseas Arrivals and Departures 1976*, Table 9. Australian Residents Departing - Short-term Movement, Reference 4.3, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Putra Laxana (1984), 'A massive drive to woo, win the Aussies', *New Straits Times*, 18 July.

<sup>15</sup> K. Baradan (1988), 'New pact gives MAS extra flight to Australia', *The Star*, 2 July; and Focus on Airline Services (no author) (1989), 'Popular spot among Aussies', *New Sunday Times*, 26 February.

<sup>16</sup> These numbers are for calendar years, January to December, ABS (2015), *3401.0 Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, Dec 2014* Table 9: Short-term Movement, Resident Departures - Selected Destinations: Original, (Canberra: ABS)—see <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3401.0Dec%202014?OpenDocument> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>17</sup> See Tourism Malaysia (2015), 'Malaysia Tourist Arrivals by Country of Nationality December 2014', at [http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/research.asp?page=facts\\_figures](http://corporate.tourism.gov.my/research.asp?page=facts_figures) [Accessed 17 September 2015]

<sup>18</sup> Tourism Australia (2014), *Key Asian markets drive July visitor arrivals growth*, Table 1—Visitors by country of residence, 5 September at <http://www.tourism.australia.com/news/Research/research-10868.aspx> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>19</sup> Australian War Memorial, 'General Information'. See also, Behind the Wire—Australian Prisoners of War 1940–1945 (2015), Australia's War 1939–1945, 'the marches', at <http://www.w2australia.gov.au/behindwire/march.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>20</sup> High Commissioner Rod Smith, quoted in Bernama (2014), 'Australia Hails Lasting Bond With Malaysia Forged During



Sandakan Death March', *NewSarawakTribune.com*, 16 August. See <http://www.newsarawaktribune.com/news/32793/Australia-hails-lasting-bond-with-Malaysia-forged-during-Sandakan-Death-March/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>21</sup> Lynette Ramsay Silver (2010), *Blood Brothers: Sabah and Australia 1942–1945*, (Sabah: Opus Publications). Interview with author, 23 January 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Tourism Australia (2014), 'A taste of Restaurant Australia for Malaysian travel trade', *Essentials Newsletter*, 27 August at <http://storage.coremotivesmarketing.com/library/cff6edde-da90-e211-8727-00155d32390f/1652/landingpages/993f3e17-792d-e411-b59c-0050569b211c.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>23</sup> Austrade (2014), 'Culinary Challenge winner announced', 24 September at <http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/news/culinary-challenge-winner-announced>. For the finalists' videos, see, Austrade, 'Study in Australia', Videos, at <https://www.youtube.com/user/afutureunlimited/videos> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>24</sup> Ella Archibald-Binge and Anton Enus (2015), 'The best birthday ever: Poh Ling Yeow relives her first day Down Under', SBS News, 9 January at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2015/01/09/best-birthday-ever-poh-ling-yeow-relives-her-first-day-down-under>; See also, <http://pohlingyeow.com/index.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>25</sup> See SBS (2015), *Take a tour of Poh's Adelaide*, 23 April, at <http://www.sbs.com.au/food/programs/poh-and-co/slideshow> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>26</sup> Ella Archibald-Binge and Anton Enus (2015), 'Celebrity chef Adam Liaw looks back on early life in Australia', SBS News, 7 January at <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2015/01/06/celebrity-chef-adam-liaw-looks-back-early-life-australia>. See also <http://adamliaw.com> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>27</sup> Archibald-Binge and Enus, 'Celebrity chef Adam Liaw'.

<sup>28</sup> See Rogue Art (2002), *An A-Z Guide to Malaysian Art*, The Narratives in Malaysian Art Project, (Kuala Lumpur: Rogue Art), p. 17. For more on Frank Sullivan and the early years of the National Art Gallery of Malaysia, see Neil Manton (2008), *The Arts of Independence: Frank Sullivan in Singapore and Malaysia*, (Canberra: Holt Arts).

<sup>29</sup> No author (1960), 'Malayan Federation stages exhibition of

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<sup>31</sup> Exhibition Notes (2000), *Di Antara Dua Pedalaman / Between Remote Regions*, A South Australia / Malaysia Cultural Exchange, (Port Adelaide: Country Arts SA).

<sup>32</sup> Helen Musa (1994), 'Australia lavishes culture on Malaysia', *The Canberra Times*, 22 October, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> Musa, 1994.

<sup>34</sup> Asialink Arts Residencies have been supported by the Australian Council for the Arts and all the state and territory government Arts bodies/agencies and in Malaysia, the Hijjas family and Rimbun Dahan have extended their support.

<sup>35</sup> See Asialink website for more details - [http://asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts/asialink\\_2015\\_arts\\_residents](http://asialink.unimelb.edu.au/arts/asialink_2015_arts_residents) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>36</sup> Judith Elen (2012) 'A couple with grand designs' *The Australian*, 23 June. See <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/life/travel/a-couple-with-grand-designs/story-e6frg8rf-1226404572074> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>37</sup> In addition to the Australian artist residencies, other residencies for ASEAN country artists, other international artists, and for choreographers are supported at Rimbun Dahan. See [http://rimbundahan.org/?page\\_id=22](http://rimbundahan.org/?page_id=22) [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>38</sup> Thanks to Angela Hijjas for sharing her personal story and the story of her family's work in nurturing the Australia—Malaysia art exchange. Interview in Kuala Lumpur on 10 February 2015.

<sup>39</sup> No author (1956), 'Australian Films for Malaya', *The Canberra Times*, 15 November, p. 9.

<sup>40</sup> Opalyn Mok (2013), 'Tropfest SEA to showcase short films from the region', *Malay Mail Online*, 20 December, at <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/tropfest-sea-to-showcase-short-films-from-the-region> [Accessed 2 September 2015]. For more information, see <http://tropfest.com/sea/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]. The only conditions for a Tropfest entry are that films must be limited to seven minutes and that the Tropfest Signature Item (TSI)

must be featured. For the 2014 festival in Malaysia, the TSI was rice and, in 2015, it was a wheel.

<sup>41</sup> Chandran Jeshurun (2007), *Malaysia: Fifty Years of Diplomacy, 1957–2007*, (Petaling Jaya: The Other Press Sdn Bhd), p. 366, citing High Commissioner to Malaysia (1969–72) John Rowland's recollection that diplomats had to adjust to the Tunku's diplomatic style and that many important decisions were believed to have been made during a round of golf.

<sup>42</sup> Special Correspondent (1965), 'Replacing Mr Critchley: Transfer leaves diplomatic void', *The Canberra Times*, 17 November, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> Thanks to three Australian diplomats, whose first postings were to Kuala Lumpur, for sharing their memories: Geoff Bentley (1964–67), Jan Arriens (1969–71) and Rex Stevenson (1970–72).

<sup>44</sup> ABS (1957), *Overseas Trade, 1955–56*, 'Table 1: Exports from Australia, 1955–56', Bulletin no. 53, (Canberra: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics), p. 34.

<sup>45</sup> Tan Chin Nam with Larry Parr (2006), *Never Say I Assume!*, (Selangor: MPH Publishing), p. 221.

<sup>46</sup> Tan, *Never Say I Assume!* p. 227.

<sup>47</sup> No author (1957), 'Malayans See Australian Rules Football', *The Canberra Times*, 25 February, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> For details go to <http://azlanshahcup.my/> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

<sup>49</sup> Stephanie Sta Maria (2014), 'Ong Beng Teong's Vision for Australian badminton', *JOM Magazine*, 18 June, at <http://jommagazine.com.au/ong-beng-teongs-vision-australian-badminton/> [Accessed 2 September 2015] See also, Pro Badminton Academy, at <http://www.probadmintonacademy.com/index.html> [Accessed 2 September 2015]

## CONCLUSION

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