

27<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
R.G. Casey Building  
John McEwen Crescent  
Barton ACT 0221 Australia

**RE: Public Submission to the White Paper for Australian Foreign Policy**

To whom it concerns,

CIDC Limited is an independent, international consultancy company and has supported a wide range of health and public sector projects, research and reform programs for over 12 years. This includes diverse engagements in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and Africa for Ministries of Health, Finance and Social Affairs, often financed by institutions such as the World Bank, ADB, UNICEF, the Global Fund for Aids/ TB/ Malaria and various national governments and private sector organisations. Our team of professional consultants include Australian citizens and others with direct links to Australian Universities and research organisations, and it is on this basis that we felt a submission to the White Paper for Foreign Affairs was important.

A nationalistic, trade driven foreign policy, as broadly reflected in the 6 themes highlighted in the Call For Submission paper, is an increasing popular foreign policy tool [see the U.K. and the USA], yet evidence suggests it is likely to be insufficient in alleviating poverty and ensuring sustainable development, particularly in lower income settings with poor human capital, weak governance and limited financial development options<sup>1</sup>. Such conditions are reflected in many of Australia's closest aid recipient neighbours to the north and east; i.e., PNG, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and other Small Island Developing States across the Pacific, and in many countries in Africa. Indeed aid in any form, be it humanitarian relief or development assistance is not accounted for within any of the Papers' 6 themes, which in our opinion, is a grave omission, and a step back for Australia from a potentially important role in global development.

Australia's relative contributions to international development are not insignificant, and although not yet close to the 0.7% GNP target, we are consistently ranked in the top 20 net aid contributors globally. As such it would seem logical that our Foreign Policy agenda reflect these contributions by making specific reference to the role that we could rightfully play, both regionally and globally, in the field of international development. And in so doing, reflect on and account for the role that international development itself plays in our foreign policy.

Sadly, it is our company's observation that Australia has largely stepped away from taking clear leadership roles in international development, and seems unwilling to engage deeply in many of the multi-lateral aid and development platforms. For example, although Australia positions itself to be a key advocate internationally, for violence against women, women's rights causes, its relative position within the leading multi-lateral bodies that promote these causes are minimal e.g. UN Women, UNFPA, WHO's Expert Group on intimate partner violence etc. Moreover, the erratic funding of certain development programmes, particularly those in Africa and in the area of health R&D, has done little to support Australia's reputation as a strategic or consistent donor – not for lack of funds but rather, for lack of clear vision. It should be within the scope of such a White

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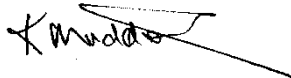
<sup>1</sup> Le Goff, Maëlan and Raju Jan Singh, "Does Trade Reduce Poverty? A view from Africa."  
<http://blogs.worldbank.org/trade/evidence-that-trade-does-reduce-poverty-but-only-if-the-conditions-are-right>

Paper on Foreign Affairs that a strategic, non-partisan, evidence-based, long-term perspective for the country's global development and aid agenda be outlined.

We would advocate the use of various approaches for country engagement and management of Australian ODA, however, it is our experience that multi-lateral platforms are effective and powerful, providing governance frameworks that are both robust and flexible, nuanced yet accountable, particularly on sensitive topics such as women's rights and GBV. A distinct and vocal role in multi-lateral forums and platforms is therefore key for a donor such as Australia.

Finally, it is our position that compliance with ratified international laws and conventions, helps to strengthen our position and indeed our effectiveness as a donor and leader in all global forums, be they trade, security or aid and development in nature. We strongly believe that Australia should continue to uphold its long tradition in supporting international human rights through honouring the international laws and conventions we are signatory to.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Maddock', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kristen L Maddock  
Director CIDC Limited