

The world is full of problems without passports: War, poverty, hunger, displaced people and climate change know no boundaries. Our security, prosperity and influence can only be ensured when we contribute to overcoming global challenges. We need to seek our national interest in concert with other nations, to shape a future where Australia – and the rest of the world – can flourish.

We pride ourselves on being the land of the fair go. Fairness is reflected in many of our domestic and international policies, none more so than our overseas aid program. Australian aid has helped millions of people overcome barriers that cause poverty, oppression and injustice and to access a good education, quality healthcare, security and sustainable employment. Australia should continue to give people living in the poorest parts of the world a fair go through a stronger aid program.

We should also show our commitment to fairness and justice by strongly supporting international law and the institutions that apply it. In particular, Australia should continue to show its support for the International Criminal Court (including through increased funding, if possible). Not only is it morally right to bring to trial those accused of the most serious crimes, but the signal this sends that the perpetrators of such acts will systematically face justice will ultimately lead to a more secure world from which all Australians stand to benefit.

Climate change is the greatest threat to our region's future prosperity. Environmental degradation and unsustainable use of natural resources lead to more extreme weather events and a vulnerable global food system. Australia's future stability depends on a healthy planet, so we must meet emissions targets to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees celsius. Plus, more Australian aid can help our regional neighbours to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Climate change has a devastating impact on the Pacific, whose island nations are among the most impacted. Sea levels rise, crop yields decrease, fishing stocks are depleted, flooding and erosion threaten households and livelihoods. These conditions unless tackled will lead to a significant escalation in climate-induced migration. Australia has a significant role to play in increasing contributions to the Global Green Climate Fund.

If we act now, we can leave our children a healthy planet. Australia needs to act decisively to address climate change and its effects on vulnerable people. We have the means to help countries already threatened by climate change, many of whom are our regional neighbours and have not caused the destructive climate conditions they face today.

Australia's prosperity and security depend on overcoming extreme poverty and inequality, and promoting inclusive and sustainable growth for all. As the gap between rich and poor widens, global

security becomes weaker and weaker. By writing off poor nations' excess debts, Australia could support development in those countries. By supporting a minimum tax on corporate income, Australia can help to stop corporations secretly shifting money around the world.

We also can and should work with other like-minded countries through organizations like the OECD to tackle tax avoidance through the use of off-shore accounts and profit-shifting, by increasing information-sharing and closing the loopholes corporations and wealthy individuals exploit, at the expense of ordinary tax-paying citizens. If such cooperation could ultimately lead to corporations paying their fair share of the tax burden in both developed and developing countries, that in itself would go a long way to decreasing inequality.

I want women and girls everywhere to have the same opportunities we enjoy in Australia. If women and girls – who represent half the world's population – had equal access to education and employment, they, their families and their communities would have the chance to thrive. And we know that when women and girls are empowered, everyone benefits. If we're serious about ending poverty, we must focus on women and girls.

Education is vital to breaking the cycle of poverty. But conflict, teacher shortages, scarce learning resources, lack of disability support, and the need to work for an income keep about 60 million children out of primary school. Australia must support access to quality education for all girls and boys, no matter where they live.

The main goal of Australian aid should be ending poverty, not promoting Australia's short term interests. The purpose of aid is to break down the barriers of poverty that stop vulnerable people from reaching their potential. Australia can help the world reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and it's time we did so. This is not just an altruistic vision, as extreme poverty, together with problems associated with climate change are push factors in terms of migration flows. If Australia wants to limit migration flows, it makes sense to address the root causes.

The causes of mass migration also, obviously, include armed conflict. We must do more to assist conflict-ridden, fragile nations because power vacuums can lead to human rights abuses and greater instability. Australia can help to ensure stable government and just institutions in these nations, to resolve and prevent further conflict. We can do so in partnership with the United Nations and its institutions, including the Peace Building Commission.

Australia must do more to prevent conflict as part of aid and development. This means preventing violence and actively cultivating conditions for human flourishing – like good governance, economic activity and social engagement.

Australian foreign policy should empower communities to reach their potential and actively contribute on the world stage. This means promoting and contributing to initiatives that deliver human security, freedom from violence and other basic needs. The resulting stability will greatly benefit Australia.

The Australian government and the diplomats who represent it should not lose sight of the medium to long term interests of all Australian people in the pursuit of short term economic interests. What good is it to have a healthy balance of trade in the short term if climate change and the security threats posed by extreme inequality and increasing resource scarcity mean that Australians are facing a bleak future?