

White Paper Submission Team  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Australia

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To Whom It May Concern

In anticipation of the development of a new Australian Foreign Policy White Paper, I am writing to request priority be given to four key elements.

The first is the need to reconsider our country's tendency to view Australian foreign policy interests as 'Moat Australia', which historically has preferenced those areas, interests and concerns of closest geographical proximity to our physical territory in concentric circles expanding out from the Australian mainland. This perspective, or worldview, is no longer sufficiently reflective of the challenges arising from a highly interconnected, globalised world. Indeed, it is an outdated and dangerous worldview. Such perspectives do not serve the interests of Australia or its citizens, and – should it be allowed to persist – places them at increased risk. Accordingly, the 'Moat Australia' perception of Australia's foreign policy interests needs to be radically reconsidered.

Secondly, and evidencing this reality, is the threat presented by infectious diseases and other contemporary hazards to human, animal and plant health. Outbreaks caused by diseases like pandemic influenza, Ebola, and antimicrobial resistance – to name just a few – are unlikely to arise from within Australia. They do, however, present a clear and present danger not only with respect to the health and wellbeing of the Australian population, but they also directly threaten our national economy, international trade, and social and political functioning. Disease outbreaks are just one example whereby the international environment potentially presents a series of challenges, necessitating a new, holistic perspective that 'Moat Australia' no longer sufficiently prepares us for. The 'threat' these incidents present can – and importantly are – arising from multiple countries around the world, not just from those within our immediate region. We thus need to be better prepared for these challenges by investing in regional and global health security initiatives, as only together can we possibly hope to address these challenges.



Third, and yet further reinforcing this need for a broadened foreign policy agenda is the challenge of climate change. Although elements of the Australian populace continue to deny the existence of human-induced climate change, the evidence and data is clear: human activity is directly contributing to a changing environment. This phenomenon presents a threat not only to Australia's population now, but also future generations. Given our historical legacy for leading international peace and security agendas, Australia must play an instrumental role not only in reducing the immediate adverse impacts of human activity but also advocating strongly for international consensus on addressing climate changes and its impacts.

Lastly, in light of the ongoing threat posed to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) persons internationally, special consideration and priority should be given to addressing LGBTIQ human rights around the world. Indeed, along with advancing gender equality, LGBTIQ rights should form a central platform of Australian foreign policy. This policy stance is consistent with our like-minded strategic allies, including the United States of America, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Advancing gender and LGBTIQ equality should be included within every element of our country's foreign policy, and we should – as a country committed to equality – seek every opportunity to promote human rights and avoid discriminatory policies and the respect for human rights.

Should the Review Panel require any additional information or clarification on the above points, I am happy to provide research-informed data and evidence to inform policy decisions.

Yours faithfully

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