



Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi

March 27, 2014

Press Release

on

ICWA Delegation's Visit to Australia

(17-21 March 2014)

On the invitation of ICWA's MoU partner- Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA), Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia, Director General, ICWA, led a five-member delegation to Australia from 17-21 March 2014 to participate in the first ever AIIA - ICWA dialogue. The dialogue was held in Melbourne on 18 March 2014 at Australia-India Institute (AII), AIIA's partner in the dialogue.

Ms Zara Kimpton, National Vice President of AIIA in her welcome address outlined the status of bilateral ties and expressed that with changing global dynamics, the two countries need to come together in institutions such as G-20 and ASEAN centred initiatives.

In his opening address, DG, ICWA, expressed the necessity to promote an abiding understanding between the two countries and appreciated Australia's endeavour to treat the Asian century as 'an Australian opportunity'. He stressed on blending purposeful pro-activism in bilateral affairs and enlightened multilateralism.



DG, ICWA and other members of the ICWA delegation with High Commissioner of India, and AIIA, Australia-India Institute counterparts.

Professor Amitabh Mattoo, Director, AII stated that the ties were at the cusp of transformation and the strategic community need to provide valuable policy suggestions. Ambassador Biren Nanda, Indian High Commissioner to Australia apprised about the recent developments in the bilateral free trade negotiations and explored the feasibility of uranium exports from Australia. He added that there was inadequate understanding of the progress in bilateral engagements.

Discussions in the one-day dialogue primarily addressed topics related to (a) international developments, (b) regional situation in Indo-Pacific, (c) the state of the nation and (d) the politico-strategic dimension of bilateral ties. Both sides buttressed the need for greater dialogue to develop an understanding.

During this visit, the ICWA delegation interacted with the Australia Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), Canberra and discussed developments in Indo-Pacific region, US role in global security, terrorism and Afghanistan. Moreover, stress was laid on enhancing understanding on education, training, scientific cooperation and greater political interactions. The delegation also held discussions with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Canberra, and at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, and views were exchanged about the significance of India-Australia relations from bilateral, regional and global perspectives.

The visit contributed immensely in enhancing goodwill and understanding between the two nations.



Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia, DG, ICWA delivering his opening remarks at the bilateral dialogue.
