



MEDIA RELEASE

**EUROPEAN AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (EABC)
2013 BUSINESS MISSION TO EUROPE
2 - 7 JUNE 2013**

The European Australian Business Council (EABC) is honoured that the Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, has agreed, with the Government's support, to lead its 2013 Business Mission to Europe.

This will be the seventh mission undertaken by the European Australian Business Council (EABC) whose objective is to promote trade and investment between Australia and Europe, and to connect business and policy-makers on issues affecting Australia's largest economic relationship.

EABC Chairman and Chairman of BKK Partners Alastair Walton said that the Council was delighted the Governor-General had agreed to be the leader of the Mission.

"European investment has been fundamental to the development of the Australian economy, with human, intellectual and financial capital, and the core values which underpin our democratic institutions.

In 2012 total accumulated investment between Australia and the European Union exceeded \$A1 trillion for the first time, as Australia's rapidly growing pool of managed funds increasingly seek investment opportunities in Europe and other overseas markets.

Mr Walton said "much is to be gained by promoting opportunities for Australian and European companies in our respective markets, and also joint opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.

"The Governor-General's leadership of the Mission will bolster efforts by Australian and European leaders to forge a stronger and deeper bilateral relationship.

"In 2011 the Council hosted a major event in Sydney with the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and this week Vice President Joaquin Almunia will be our guest in Melbourne. Each year the Council hosts numerous business delegations from Europe, many led by their Head of State, Head of Government or a senior Government Minister.

"We are honoured that the EABC Mission will be the first economic mission led by a Governor-General of Australia. This will send a powerful message of how Australia recognises the value and extent of its relationship with Europe.

"I am delighted that the Business Council of Australia will be represented by the Immediate Past President and serving Vice President, Graham Bradley AM, and former President Hugh Morgan AC, as well as many leading Australian business and policy figures."

Mr Bradley said that the inaugural *Australia Europe Leadership Dialogue* will provide a high-level platform to bring Australia's interests to the table with European Commissioners, Members of the European Parliament and senior officials.

"*The Economist* has described how Brussels is fast becoming the world's regulatory capital. The decisions made in Brussels are shaping the future of Europe and influencing the global policy agenda in which we all have a stake.

"What are the implications for Australia of the recently announced negotiations for an EU-US free trade agreement? Between them the EU and US cover around fifty per cent of global GDP. This is one of the important issues we will be discussing in Brussels," Mr Bradley said.

The programme will also include meeting with business and industry leaders in France – a G20 partner and the world's fifth largest economy, and in Austria and Slovakia – two strongly-performing, export-oriented economies bridging the former western and eastern European divide.

The Mission will be made up of twenty-five delegates who will travel to Paris, Brussels, Bratislava and Vienna between Sunday 2nd June and Friday 7th June 2013.

ENDS

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