

AKBC-KABC 36th Annual Meeting

Joint Statement

The AKBC and KABC met for the 36th Annual Meeting in Sydney on 1-2 October 2015. The theme of the discussion was partnering for the future and the following four areas were examined:

- Resources and Infrastructure
- Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement (KAFTA)
- Financial Services
- New Technologies

Resources and Infrastructure

The Business Councils agreed on new strategies to assist resource industries with reduced demand from a downturn in economic growth and examined ways to strengthen cooperation.

Greater cooperation between Australia and the Republic of Korea, including in third country markets, would enable these countries to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the Asian infrastructure market. The Business Councils welcomed the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and agreed that new and innovative strategies would be required to take advantage of expanding infrastructure needs throughout Asia.

Presenters in this sector highlighted the growth opportunities in the near term, particularly for Australian exporters. At the same time they also highlighted the challenges that investors faced due to the complex, multi-level environmental approval process which is further complicated by the threat of third party litigation once a project receives approval.

Presenters also highlighted the need for greater certainty and confidence in the primacy of the scientific assessment process and the timely nature of that process to create greater confidence for investors and the community.

Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement (KAFTA)

This meeting was the first gathering since the entry into force of the Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement. The Business Councils welcomed the reduction in tariffs which would assist businesses during difficult economic conditions. The Business Councils noted that the benefits of KAFTA would be even more prevalent when the global economy recovered and agreed to utilise KAFTA to expand cooperation in the services sector.

Financial Services

The Business Councils recognised the future growth potential of financial markets in Asia and welcomed the Asian Region Funds Passport (ARFP). The Business Councils agreed that they needed to work harder to enhance cooperation in financial markets and noted the importance of deregulation to foster growth.

New Technologies

The Business Councils noted that the emergence of new technologies would assist cooperation between Australia and the Republic of Korea. The Business Councils would like to bolster cooperation in new technologies and noted the importance of advanced technology for important projects such as the development of offshore oil plants.

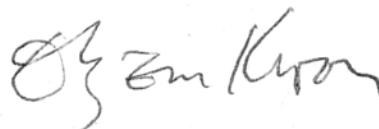
Services Sector Promotional Forum (SSPF)

The second Services Sector Promotional Forum (SSPF) was convened alongside this meeting with over 30 representatives attending. The representatives investigated regulatory issues in the financial, legal and construction services sector and strengthened business relationships between Australia and the Republic of Korea. In its report of recommendations to both governments, the representatives emphasised services as the next wave of economic growth in both countries.

Signed



Honourable Mark Vaile AO
Chairman AKBC



Mr Kwon Oh Joon
Chairman KABC