

ADDRESS BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL JEFFERY AC CVO MC  
**GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
**AFTERNOON TEA WITH STAFF OF THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION**  
PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
4 AUGUST 2008

Thank you for your hospitality today and your welcome to Marlena and myself.

It is a great pleasure to be here to thank you on behalf of the Government and people of Australia for the excellent work you do on our nation's behalf.

With nearly 300 staff in the country working for the different Australian Government departments and agencies, you are making a significant and valued contribution to our strong bilateral relationship. This goodwill and cooperation covers many areas and goes back to one of the most difficult times we have had to face together in repelling the Japanese invasion during the Second World War.

I have been a frequent visitor to Papua New Guinea since being posted here from 1966-69 with the 1st Battalion, The Pacific Islands Regiment. Indeed, Marlena and I were married in the 'Haus Lotu' at Taurama Barracks over forty years ago.

The strong relationship between our countries owes much to your efforts across the spectrum of aid assistance, diplomacy, defence and security, support for veterans, immigration and the other aspects which make for a robust and thriving inter-country relationship.

As Patron of the Kokoda Track Foundation in Australia, I see the increasing numbers of Australians who are walking the Track as a real opportunity to build further bridges between our nations. I know many of you will be involved in facilitating visits, administering aid projects and honouring the proud history of the Kokoda veterans from both Australia and this nation.

Today, I would especially like to thank the many locally-engaged staff who bring a welcome and important local perspective and knowledge to the work of the Mission and who demonstrate on a daily basis, the spirit of cooperation and goodwill between our nations.

For everyone here, thank you again for your hospitality.

Marlena and I wish you the very best for the future.