

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

**Trade Winds, Troubled Waters:**  
**Flagship Panel urges Maritime Steel Before CECA Round 11 in New Delhi**

*Melbourne, Australia – 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025 — Senior Australian and Indian leaders have warned that booming bilateral trade will stall unless matched by uncompromising maritime security cooperation — with the message landing just weeks before the 11th round of Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) negotiations in New Delhi.*

Speaking at the Australia–India in the Indian Ocean Century symposium, India’s High Commissioner Gopal Baglay highlighted the rapid progress of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and the urgency of aligning trade and security. *“We are cooperating not merely for our own security, but as a force for the larger global good... This is our responsibility towards stability in the Pacific — and the world beyond. The 11th round of CECA talks later this month will build on this momentum across trade, maritime collaboration, and defence interoperability.”*

Australia’s Special Envoy for Indian Ocean Affairs, The Hon. Tim Watts MP, underscored India’s role: *“India is a top-tier security partner for Australia. Trade cannot flourish if the seas it travels remain vulnerable. Since the signing of ECTA, \$30 billion worth of Australian exports have been extended to India tariff-free, and Australians have saved \$225 million on goods from India.”*

Former Trade Minister Dan Tehan MP warned of rising global challenges: *“The Australia–India partnership in particular is going to be absolutely vital. We cannot stop growing the relationship — we must continue to build it.”*

National security expert Dr Josh Roose linked violent extremism to economic fragility: *“Successful economies are critical to addressing terrorism. Without stability, the foundations for trade collapse.”*

Consul General of Japan in Melbourne Mr FUROYA Tokuro reaffirmed that *“Japan along with Australia and India plays an important role in the world based on the trust and people to people ties. QUAD - cooperation among leading 4 maritime countries of Japan, Australia, India and US, focuses on practical cooperation for the region including ASEAN countries and Pacific Islands countries. It is a great framework leading to the Free and Open Indo-Pacific.”*

Convenor of the flagship panel *Securing the Indo-Pacific: Trade Winds, Trust & Transformation*, said: *“Economic cooperation without strategic cooperation is a false promise. With CECA talks imminent, this is the moment to match trade ambition with maritime steel. Indian Ocean century is the only project of the century”*

Media are invited to request interviews with keynote speakers and panel convenors to discuss:

- How CECA negotiations can strengthen security–trade alignment
- The next phase of Australia–India defence and maritime cooperation
- The role of QUAD in safeguarding Indo-Pacific Region in counter-terrorism and extremism as economic risk factors

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Media Contact:  
Akashika Mohla  
0411 805 212 | [Aakashika@gmail.com](mailto:Aakashika@gmail.com)