

**Message for International Education Week**  
**By The Honourable Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia**

I am pleased to provide my support to International Education Week, an initiative that builds connections between people across the globe and enhances their interest in other cultures and languages. International education is critical to cooperation and mutual understanding between nations around the world.

The Australian Government encourages Australian students to undertake international study experiences. In 2008 more than 11,000 Australian students participated in outbound mobility programs. Australia also has 575,000 international students enrolled in higher education, schools and English language programs in Australia.

International students who have undertaken an Australian education experience, similar to their Australian counterparts who have studied overseas, represent a pool of knowledge about each country that underpins bilateral relationships and promotes educational, research, commercial or people-to-people linkages that continue throughout their lives.

Australia values the contribution international students make to the academic life of its institutions and to the communities in which they live. International education also provides a global benchmark for our educational and training sector, ensuring that Australia learns from international developments, builds intellectual and research capital, and creates long-lasting links between individuals and institutions.

The 11,500 American students that study in Australia each year offer Australians a window into American society, culture and traditions, which improves Australian understanding of your country and builds stronger ties every day.

I offer my congratulations to Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, and Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, along with their staff at the Department of Education and the Department of State for organising such a successful week of educational events.

The Hon Julia Gillard MP  
Deputy Prime Minister of Australia