



THE HON. DR MIKE KELLY MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support

Wednesday, 3 February 2010

002/2010

RECEPTION TO MARK FIRST YEAR OF OPERATIONS OF ASIA PACIFIC CIVIL-MILITARY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

The Asia-Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence, a key initiative in the Government's strategy for developing a more effective civil-military capability, has marked one year of operation.

The Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence was established in late 2008. The Centre's mission is to support the development of national civil-military capabilities to prevent, prepare for, and respond more effectively to conflicts and disasters overseas.

The need for improved national civil-military coordination for disaster and conflict management was an important lesson learned from Australia's significant involvement in peace operations and responses to natural disasters such as the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

Located in Queanbeyan near Canberra, the Centre has already established a credible reputation at home and abroad in advancing Australia's commitment to enhanced civil-military relations.

In its first year of operation, the Centre conducted the Civil-Military Interaction Seminar attended by more than 100 civilians as well as military and police officers from more than 20 countries, assisted the African Union to develop guidelines for the protection of civilians in conflict zones, and developed a conceptual framework to assist inter-agency collaboration for whole-of-government mission planning, decision making and implementation.

In addition, the Centre has established important links with regional bodies, the United Nations and other key international organisations.

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly MP, said "The Centre plays a key role in capturing lessons learned in complex operations, hosting international conferences, facilitating training and education, and strengthening linkages between regional and international agencies and institutions engaged in operations."

Dr Kelly will host a reception at Parliament House this evening to mark the first year of operations of the Centre. Invited guests include the Chief of the Defence Force, Vice Chief of the Defence Force and Service Chiefs, senior officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Attorney-

General Department, AusAID, and the Australian Federal Police, as well as diplomats, academics, and representatives from business and the non-government sector.

In April, the Centre will host the 3rd International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations (www.challengesforum.org) in Queanbeyan, which will be attended by more than 200 delegates from more than 20 countries. The Centre will also assist in the development of the Australian Civilian Corps by providing civil-military training.

The Centre's Deputy Director is provided by the New Zealand Government, and Non-Government Organisation advice is provided by a representative from the Australian Council for International Development. The Centre is administered by the Department of Defence and comprised of personnel from Defence, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Attorney General's Department, the Australian Agency for International Development, and the Australian Federal Police.

For more information on the Asia-Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence go to www.civmilcoe.gov.au.

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