



**Forum on Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs 1960- 72  
19 February 2013, Government House, Canberra**

**Outcomes Report**

This report summarises the outcomes of a Forum on Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs 1960- 1972 hosted by the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) in Canberra on 19 February 2013.

The Forum brought together some of Australia's most eminent academics and experts in international relations and former senior diplomats and government officials to discuss the life, work and achievements of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs serving in the period of 1960- 72. The Forum focused on their individual contributions and influence on Australian foreign policy thinking. These insights have continuing relevance.

Highlights of the Forum included:

- Participation by more than 40 academics and experts in international affairs
- Involvement of former Secretaries and Directors of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Department of Defence and Office of National Assessments
- The launch of a book on R.G. Casey, the product of the first forum in this series conducted at Government House in February 2010
- Visit by the Governor-General as Visitor and Patron of the AIIA
- Positive feedback from participants, with feedback scoring up to 4.9 out of 5.0



Question time in the Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs Forum,  
Government House, Yarralumla, 19 February 2013



## Objectives

The Forum on Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs 1960- 72 was held in response to the success of the R.G. Casey Forum 2010. Its objectives included:

- Discussing academic papers on the aspects of the work and achievements of each Minister for Foreign Affairs which have continuing relevance
- Assembling a group of distinguished diplomats of the era, to set the scene of the 1960s and early 70s and discuss the challenges faced by the Ministers and the Department of External Affairs throughout the 1960s and 1970s
- To capture oral history contributions and prepare a publication of proceedings

## Participants

Speakers and discussants came from a variety of organisations including:

### *Government:*

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

### *Academic Institutions:*

- Australian National University (ANU)
- Australian Defence Force Academy at The University of New South Wales (ADFA)
- University of Melbourne (UoM)
- Murdoch University (MU)
- University of New South Wales (UNSW)
- Deakin University (DU)
- University of Sydney (USYD)

### *Former Diplomats and Government Officials:*

- Mr Andrew Farran, former diplomat, former senior lecturer at Monash University and former President of AIIA VIC
- Robert Furlonger CB, former Director-General, Office of National Assessments
- Pierre Hutton, former Private Secretary to R.G. Casey, 1958-60 and Head of Mission to Nigeria, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, The Sudan and Switzerland
- James Ingram AO FAIIA, former Director, Australian Development Assistance Bureau and former Executive Director, UN World Food Programme
- Professor Michael L'Estrange AO, former Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2005-09
- Mack Williams, former High Commissioner to Philippines and South Korea.
- Garry Woodard FAIIA, former Ambassador to Burma and China



## Format

The Forum was divided into four sessions, each with a presentation followed by a general discussion guided by a moderator:

- The Importance of the Period
  - Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton FASSA
  - Professor Joan Beaumont
- South- East Asia: Confrontation and the Vietnam War
  - Peter Edwards AM FAIIA
  - Professor Jeffrey Grey
- East Asia: Relations with China and Japan
  - Professor James Cotton
  - Dr David Lee, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
  - Emeritus Professor Peter Drysdale AO FAIIA
- Memories of Serving Australian Interests Abroad
  - Moderated by Mr Geoffrey Miller AO, former senior diplomat and former National Vice President of the AIIA



Peter Edwards AM



## Feedback from Participants

Feedback from participants confirmed that the Forum was considered a great success. Based on the results of the evaluation, the Forum scored an average of 4.8 out of 5, making it one of the AIIA's most successful events. Organisation received the highest score, with a score of 4.9 out of 5.

Feedback received included:

- “Enjoyed the quality of the presentations by distinguished historians”
- “Highlight was the opportunity to meet Her Excellency the Governor General”
- “Opportunity to meet with old diplomatic colleagues and academics”
- “A highpoint was the panel reminiscences of those who knew and worked with the ministers of the period”
- “A good chance to network with those who work in the field”
- “Appreciate the gracious opportunity to attend a function at Government House”
- “Superb organisation of the Foreign Ministers’ forum. It was a pleasure to participate”
- “Excellent in terms of its intellectual substance, the range of speakers that that was brought together and its function as a promoter of social contacts”

## Outputs

Proceedings were recorded and will be available for viewing on the AIIA YouTube channel. They will also be provided to Australia's Public Affairs Channel (A-PAC) for broadcast.

A publication of the proceedings is currently under preparation to disseminate discussions to a wider audience. As for the previous Casey publication, the AIIA will work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on this book.



From left to right: Andrew Farran; Geoff Miller AO; Pierre Hutton;  
Robert Furlonger CB; James Ingram AO



## Acknowledgements

The Forum on Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs 1960- 72 Forum was made possible through the generous support of:

- The AIIA's Patron and Visitor, Her Excellency Governor-General Ms Quentin Bryce AC, and the staff of Government House, Canberra. Special thanks are due to Events Manager Mr Nathan McKenzie who provided outstanding assistance to the event.
- The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Historical Publications and Information Section for its support and expert advice.

The Australian Institute of International Affairs would like to thank all participants in the Forum, particularly speakers and moderators.

Thanks are due to the organising Sub-Committee comprised of:

- Mr John Robbins, National Deputy Director
- Ms Rachel Davies, Research Intern
- Mr Max Feng, Research Intern
- Ms Chelsea Jacka, Research Intern
- Mr Robert Ware, Research Intern
- Mr Adrian March, former Research Intern.

This event demonstrated that a series focussed on significant historical figures in Australian foreign policy can attract significant interest. It is hoped to retain a regular place for a historical event in the AIIA's calendar in order progressively to complete a series on Former Ministers for Foreign Affairs.



(Back): Governor General HE Quentin Bryce AC; Adrian March; Zara Kimpton OAM  
(Front): Melissa Conley Tyler; Rachel Davies; Chelsea Jacka; Garry Woodard FAIIA