

# **Remarks by Minister Kung Ming-hsin, National Development Council**

August 17, 2022

I wish to thank Representative Jenny Bloomfield of the Australian Office, Minister Pan Wen-chung of the Ministry of Education, Executive Director Lin San-quei, and everyone here for attending this event. Good morning, everyone.

I'm very glad to have this opportunity to meet you again. I would like to welcome you all to the signing ceremony today. The ceremony is an extension of the Australia-Taiwan English Language Learning Dialogue we initiated in March and we have upgraded the Dialogue to an Action Plan. It contains six objectives and we will continue our implementation based on these objectives.

Taiwan's bilingual policy began in 2018. President Tsai Ing-wen strengthened the bilingual policy in her second term in 2020 and the NDC and Ministry of Education, the two agencies responsible for implementation, have worked hard in the last two years with substantive results. In terms of the fundamentals, everyone involved in all levels of education, including junior high schools and elementary schools, university students, and the general public, understand the importance of learning English because it helps us increase our national competitiveness. As the Taiwanese people will need to communicate extensively with the international community, English language skills will remain critical for maintaining international connections. We have achieved some results in the past two years but it is obvious that we need to do more. We must continue to work with the representative offices of foreign countries, and

therefore I am very grateful for our partnership with the Australian Office.

We all know that Australia attaches great importance to English language courses and programs and assigns expert professionals for their implementation. These programs will be of great help to us in improving Taiwan's English language skills and we are very grateful for them. This program is specifically designed to strengthen English language learning in vocational education. This is why we invited Executive Director Lin San-quei and the Executive Officer of the Ministry of Labor to attend this event. I believe their attendance is very meaningful.

Representative Jenny Bloomfield mentioned the bilateral collaboration between Taiwan and Australia. We have so many opportunities for collaboration. Economic and trade relations

between Taiwan and Australia have increased rapidly in terms of both bilateral trade and investments.

Compared to economic and trade relations with other countries, the growth has been exceedingly rapid, and we have so much room for future collaboration. In addition to English language learning, we can also focus on other collaborative projects such as green energy and net zero carbon emissions. Australia is rich in solar power and other green energy resources. We need to consider how to work together or how the relevant technologies can achieve our goal of transformation to net-zero emissions through mutual cooperation. I think this is a very important strategy for cooperation. I wish to express my gratitude once again. Taiwan has always hoped to join CPTPP and the Australian government has always voiced its support for Taiwan's hard work.

We are deeply grateful. And most importantly, we remain steadfast in our shared democratic values and our dedication to this partnership.

Previously, we were also discussing the communication and interactions between people. We have many members of the New Colombo Plan in the audience. Representative Bloomfield mentioned earlier that thousands of young Australians have come to Taiwan through the New Colombo Plan since 2015. That is excellent news. Additionally, more than 250,000 people from Taiwan have participated in the Australian working holiday program. It is clear that the sharing of human resources between Taiwan and Australia, especially young people, has become a very important basis for future bilateral relations. We hope that the Action Plan will create more opportunities for building closer ties between these

young people. Although the Action Plan is mainly implemented for bilingual education, we hope that this partnership will become more comprehensive in nature. Therefore, I am glad to see guests such as school teachers and our colleagues from the Ministry of Education are also invited by the Australian Office to witness the ceremony today.

I wish to express my gratitude once again to Representative Bloomfield for her support and hard work. I look forward to continuing our partnership and endeavors together. Thank you all.

Attachment 2

## **Remarks by Minister Pan Wen- chung, Ministry of Education**

August 17, 2022

Australian Office in Taipei Representative

Jenny Bloomfield, National Development Council  
Minister Kung Ming-hsin, distinguished guests,  
educational partners, welcome!

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Australian Office in Taipei and the National Development Council for their active assistance and support. At the "Australia-Taiwan English Language Learning Dialogue" held in March of this year, experts and scholars from Taiwan and Australia shared their experience in English learning with attendees, such as schools and local governments, and discussed resources, promotion, and cooperation in bilingual education. Now, thanks to the collaborative efforts of all parties involved, we have finally arrived at the signing ceremony of the "Australia-Taiwan English Language Learning Partnership Action Plan," a plan which will lay a solid foundation of

cooperation for Taiwan's bilingual policy moving forward.

Since President Tsai announced the Bilingual 2030 policy, the Ministry of Education has promoted bilingual education at all stages of learning through the three main pillars of “comprehensively increasing capabilities,” “focused cultivation,” and “narrowing gaps,” all with the aim of strengthening the English ability of the Taiwanese people and thus enhancing national competitiveness. By fully activating Taiwan’s bilingual education system, we will establish a flexible and innovative learning model, accumulate more English teaching talents, use digital technologies to create widely accessible individualized learning opportunities, and promote the internationalization of the educational system.

The action plan signed among the Ministry of



Education, the National Development Council and the Australian Office calls for cooperation in objectives including educational aspects, such as accelerating the development of Taiwan's bilingual higher education and optimizing the bilingual environment in Taiwan's primary and secondary schools. At present, the MOE has already established regional resource centers and is actively implementing "The Program on Bilingual Education for Students in College" to help schools create a high-quality bilingual learning environment that will, it is hoped, comprehensively improve students' English ability. Primary and secondary schools have also been encouraged to establish sister school partnerships with foreign schools and use digital learning methods for cross-national teaching cooperation in the aspects of teachers and courses. It is hoped that, in the future, there will be more exchange and cooperation

between Taiwan and Australia in English learning, teaching, and vocational education and training, so as to cultivate more bilingual and internationally-mobile talents.

In addition, promoting Mandarin language education for Australian students is another objective of the action plan. Mandarin education in Taiwan has received praise from countries all over the world for its high level of quality in terms of instructors, courses, materials, methods, and testing. At present, cooperation has already been established between the MOE and Australia in the "Taiwan Huayu BEST program. In the future, Taiwan can provide Mandarin language teachers to teach in Australian schools and also provide scholarships to encourage students to learn Mandarin in Taiwan. It is also hoped that Taiwan's high-quality Mandarin language education will

benefit Australian students as well as further promote bilateral youth exchange. Also present with us today are members of the New Colombo Plan. I believe that everyone, interns and Mandarin learners alike, will be able to appreciate Taiwan's open and free social atmosphere, its adaptive teaching methods, and diverse cultural landscape.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Australian Office and the National Development Council for their support. Our first step in cooperation is in the promotion of English and Mandarin language education. I believe that in the future, our cooperation will lead to more understanding and friendship between the youth of our two countries, making both countries more internationally competitive in the process. I also hope that today's signing ceremony will lead to more opportunities for educational exchange between Taiwan and

Australia, and lead to a situation in which both countries benefit from educational cooperation. And on a final note, I would like to express our thanks to today's distinguished guests for witnessing this momentous event. Thank you.

## **Remarks by Representative Jenny Bloomfield, Australia Office**

17 August 2022

As is customary in Australia, I would first like to acknowledge Australia's and Taiwan's Indigenous peoples and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

I am very pleased to launch, together with the National Development Council and the Ministry of Education, the Action Plan for the Australia Taiwan English Language Learning partnership in this Australia Taiwan Friendship Year, marking the 40th anniversary of establishment of the Australian Office.

Australia and Taiwan are Indo-Pacific partners with rich Indigenous histories, open, diverse societies, and close economic and people-to-people links.

The inaugural Australia Taiwan English Language Learning Dialogue held in March launched a new partnership to promote a range of English language learning initiatives, further deepening our close education, vocational training and youth links.

Australia is one of the most multicultural and multilingual countries in the world, and ranks among the world's top three destinations for international education. This makes Australia a natural partner for Taiwan as it takes forward its Bilingual 2030 goals. Our world-leading English language education providers have a long record of successful English language teaching for people from a wide diversity of backgrounds. Australia's vocational training programs are world-leading and help produce a highly skilled and trained workforce for the future.

Australia and Taiwan are longstanding education, English language education and VET partners. I am delighted that, under the new partnership, Australian and Taiwanese institutions are taking forward even closer cooperation, including dual degrees and joint programs, bilingual teacher training and professional development, offering Australian curricula in Taiwanese schools and VET curricula in Taiwanese institutions, sister school partnerships and exchanges between Australian and Taiwanese leading bilingual schools.

Concrete examples of cooperation include:

- MOU between Western Sydney University and Minghsin University of Science and Technology for dual degrees and joint programs, including a three-way partnership with Vietnam. This builds on the growing

dual-degree offering of Taichung's Feng Chia University with RMIT (business and innovation, University of Queensland (business) and Monash University (computer science and IT).

- Provision of bilingual teacher training and professional development programs by the University of Adelaide, the University of Queensland, Griffith University and the Queensland Institute, to National Taiwan Normal University; the Queensland Institute to National Chi Nan University, National Dong Hwa University, Tamkang University, and Asia University; and the Queensland Department of Education to Taoyuan City Education Bureau (since August 2022), and Taipei City Government Education Bureau (since 2019) .



- MOU between Taipei's Zhongzheng Senior High and South Australia Certificate of Education, offering students the world-class, innovative SACE international curriculum. The Queensland Certificate of English has also been offered at New Taipei City's Yuteh Private School since 2019.
- Partnerships between the National Taipei University of Nursing & Health Sciences, Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology, and Taichung Hungkuang University and Australian VET institutions to integrate Australian Vocational Education and Training into their curriculum, producing highly skilled talents in key sectors, including students undertaking joint Training & Assessment certificate programs in Australia.
- Sister-school relationships, and exchanges between Melbourne's Abbotsford Primary

School and Tainan's Simen Experimental School, two leading bilingual schools in Australia and Taiwan, on bilingual education policies and practices.

- Ongoing close partnerships between Australian and Taiwanese educational and research institutions, including under-graduate and post-graduate studies, student, teacher, academic and professional exchanges, and joint publications and research collaboration.
- Over 18,000 Taiwanese enrolments annually (pre-COVID) at Australian educational institutions; over 250,000 visas issued to young Taiwanese under the Working Holiday Maker Scheme, and over 1,000 Australian under-graduate students visiting Taiwan under the Australian Government's New Colombo Plan, gaining skills and building life-long friendships and understanding.

Today's Action Plan will enable us to make the most of opportunities for even more innovative partnerships - in English language learning, Vocational Education and Training, and fostering of talent and skills, including to promote women in STEM.

It will further deepen our close education and youth linkages and enable us to strengthen international competitiveness, by producing the diverse, highly skilled, global workforce we need for our future prosperity.

I would like to thank NDC and MOE for their cooperation, and thank you all for attending today's event.

Thank you.