

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2021

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia in New York City

September 21, 2021

President Biden. Well, Scott, Mr. Prime Minister, it's great to have you here. It's good to see my friend, Prime Minister Morrison, and—today in New York. And I look forward to welcoming him to the White House on Friday, I guess, when the Quad meets, which will be a good in-person meeting.

The United States has no closer or more reliable ally than Australia. Our nations have stood together for a long, long time. And you can—we can rely on one another, and that's really a reassuring thing. We're grateful that our partnership has accomplished what we've accomplished together over 70 years.

We have a big agenda to discuss today, starting with our partnership to advance our vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific. And this conversation that we're going to continue with Japan, India—and India, on Friday, and—in the first in-person Quad leaders meeting—it's a historic event. And we're—I think we're all looking forward to it.

Prime Minister Morrison. Very.

President Biden. The United States and Australia are working in lockstep on the challenges that I laid out today in my speech to the United Nations: ending COVID, addressing the climate crisis, defending democracy, shaping the rules of the road for the 21st century. Because I meant what I said: We are at an inflection point; things are changing. We either grasp the change and deal with it, or we're going to be left behind, all of us.

And so, I want to thank you again, Scott, for—it's great to see you. I look forward to working with you and all your team. And the floor is yours.

Prime Minister Morrison. Well, thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for your warm welcome and to the entire delegation.

I think it's very important we're meeting here in New York. This month, we mark the 70th anniversary of the ANZUS alliance. There have been 14 Australian Prime Ministers since Sir Robert Menzies and 14 U.S. Presidents that have stewarded this great partnership.

The one time the ANZUS alliance was invoked was when the towers came down here in New York and were attacked. And that invoked the ANZUS alliance for the first and only time. And so, to both mark that event and remember all of those who were lost on that day, we reflect on, frankly, more than a hundred years of our partnership where we have stood together through the most difficult of times and the most prosperous of times.

And the United States and Australia have always shared a partnership that is about a world that—order that favors freedom, and that's why we've always stood together.

And in pursuing that freedom, it, of course, goes to our security interests. But more than that, it goes to global prosperity. It goes to global freedom, the freedom of our seas, the freedom of our region. It goes to addressing the great global challenges of climate change, a new energy economy, and a very, very challenging future, but one that our partnership, I have no doubt, will be able to address.

But it's not just about our partnership, because our partnership reaches out to so many others, whether it be our friends in the ASEAN nations or Europe or elsewhere, where we share so many like-minded interests.

And so, the issues we discuss in our partnership today really do reach out to so many others in terms of how we address the global challenges.

So, Mr. President, I want to thank you for your leadership and your focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

President Biden. Right.

Prime Minister Morrison. There's no doubt you get it.

President Biden. I think the last point you made is important. It goes well beyond just our partnership. Our partnership is in line with all the other democracies in the world.

And we've got a lot of work to do. So thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the InterContinental New York Barclay hotel.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Australia, Prime Minister Morrison.

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