



# **media release**

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**Australian Council for International Development**

**21 October 2010**

**14/2010**

## **NEW VISION FOR AUSTRALIAN AID PROGRAM Rudd's Five Principles Welcomed**

Speaking last night at the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) annual dinner for leaders of development organisations, Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd set out five new guiding principles for the Australian aid program.

The principles will assist in guiding Australia's approach as the aid budget grows to 0.5% of GNI by 2015.

They included an emphasis on aid effectiveness and measurement of our successes against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); strong research to inform evidence-based decisions on Australian aid; full engagement and ownership from those countries who receive Australian aid; an aid program that is fully engaged with the UN and international financial institutions; and, aid and development NGOs being actively and creatively engaged in policy development and aid effectiveness measures.

"Rudd's vision for halving global poverty is clear sighted and will shape the next decade of Australia's assistance to the world's poorest nations," said Marc Purcell, Executive Director of ACFID.

"It was pleasing to hear a clearly articulated set of principles that will underpin the future direction of the development program," said Dimity Fifer, ACFID Executive Committee Member and CEO of Australian Volunteers International.

"In particular, the focus on ensuring complete engagement with recipient countries is imperative. This combined with the Minister's commitment to work with development NGOs both in the delivery of aid and the formation of policies will help to ensure real development outcomes based on local communities' visions for their future."

Andrew Hewett, ACFID Vice-President and Executive Director of Oxfam Australia, said: "Mr Rudd's focus on the quality of aid and ensuring Australian dollars are making a tangible difference in people's lives is welcome."

"This will have an impact on all concerned in aid and development; the countries who are recipients of our aid, the Australian Government and the Australian people. The aid program needs to be highly accountable, especially to those people we are trying to assist."

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The Australian Council for International Development is an independent national association of Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the field of international aid and development.

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## ***ACFID media release (continued)***

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Archie Law, CEO of ActionAid Australia, said that while the principles were a positive move, a focus on human rights would also have been welcome. "Human rights principles should be recognised as important guides for the delivery of Australian aid," he said.

The ACFID Council runs until Friday, with the winners of the Sir Ron Wilson Human Rights Award and the Contribution to the Development Sector Award to be announced this evening.

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