



MESSAGES OF GREETING BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, JOHN HOWARD. 08.03.2006



I am delighted to welcome UNICEF's Buddy bears to Sydney and to support this creative initiative. The Buddy Bears' presence over the next weeks will add a colourful dimension to Circular Quay and highlight the crucial work UNICEF performs in helping the world's children. The central message of the Buddy Bears exhibition – of tolerance, peaceful coexistence and support for children in need – is one the Australian Government is proud to support.

Australia is proud also to continue to support the work of UNICEF in saving and improving children's lives through assistance from our overseas aid programme. In our own Asia Pacific region, UNICEF provides help to enable children to attend school, deliver immunisation programmes, combat HIV/AIDS and recover from humanitarian crises. The Australian Government supports particularly UNICEF's work on tackling HIV/AIDS: we need to continue to work to bring the impact of HIV/AIDS on children to the attention of world leaders.

I am sure the many and varied Buddy Bears brought together from around the globe will play a great part in delivering UNICEF's message. And I am delighted to hear that a new Buddy Bear carrying the distinctively colourful art of Goodwill Ambassador Ken Done is to be unveiled today.

I hope many people visit the Buddy Bears on Circular Quay and that their presence reminds us of the importance of reaching out to children that need us and assists in the vital task of fundraising for UNICEF's work.

MESSAGE OF GREETING BY THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE HON ALEXANDER DOWNER MP. 08.03.2006



I am delighted to welcome the Berlin Buddy Bears to Sydney on behalf of the Australian people. Each bear represents a member-country of the United Nations, symbolising the universal principles of peace, freedom and friendship. The bears' visit to Sydney reflects Australia's close ties with Germany and more broadly its good standing in the world community.

The Buddy Bears also reminds us of the dignity and inalienable rights of children. The UN Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that children around the world are entitled to special care and assistance. Proceeds from auctioning the bears will go to worthy causes, including UNICEF and other children's aid agencies.

Australia's relationship with Germany is one of the warmest and most significant bilateral relationships. Australia and Germany enjoy an open and cooperative relationship underpinned by extensive political, economic and cultural linkages. Germany has been a significant source of migrants to our country and Australia is a popular overseas destination for German tourists and students. The Australian Government is keen to expand further its ties with Germany, including in government, cultural and commercial spheres.

THE MESSAGE OF GREETING BY THE FEDERAL FOREIGN MINISTER FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER. 08.03.2006



Just as there are no two people alike, so the Buddy Bears each have their own unmistakable personality, thanks to their multiple creators from 140 different countries. After several stops in Europe and Asia, the Buddy Bears' world tour has now brought them to Sydney, Australia.

The colourful troupe is a unique work of art, a symbol of the universal longing for a world in which people and cultures learn to know and live in peace with one another, a world of tolerance, friendship and mutual understanding. At the same time the Buddy Bears serve as splendid ambassadors for Berlin and a Germany that seeks contact with the rest of the world.

I am delighted the travelling Buddy Bears can now enjoy a stopover in Sydney, against the world-famous backdrop of the Opera House and Harbour Bridge. I hope the Australians will take them to their hearts – and perhaps even be inspired to plan a trip to Germany.

THE MESSAGE OF GREETING BY THE GOVERNING MAYOR OF BERLIN, KLAUS WOWEREIT. 08.03.2006



Our Buddy Bears have traveled many thousands of miles, visited many different countries, and delighted countless people. Now they have arrived “down under.” Along with the bears, I would like to send my very best regards from Germany’s capital city to the people of Sydney.

Painted by artists from all over the world, these bears are intended to bring a piece of Berlin to the Australian metropolis. Each of the Buddy Bears represents one of the members of the United Nations, making the bears a symbol of the desire for peace, freedom, and international understanding. Berlin – as a formerly divided city – is sending this exhibition around the globe to greet its friends and partners from all over the world.

I am especially pleased that the Buddy Bears are to be shown on Circular Quay right across from the Sydney Opera House, one of Australia’s landmarks. I view the choice of this location as a sign of the strong ties between Germany and Australia, as well as between the cities of Berlin and Sydney.

And anyone who falls in love with the Buddy Bears can buy one of his or her own when the bears go up for auction. The proceeds help to support UNICEF and other children’s aid organizations all over the world.

I hope the people of Sydney and their many visitors will be able to enjoy a few hours of fun and reflection with Berlin’s Buddy Bears.