Paul Keating

Paul Keating was Prime Minister of Australia from 1991-1996. Keating became Finance Minister in 1983, a position he held until 1991. This role saw Mr Keating implement economic reforms that assisted the expansion of the Australian economy which included the progressive deregulation of the financial sector, the float of the Australian dollar, extensive tax reform and the dismantling of many protectionist barriers.

In December 1991 Keating became Prime Minister and led the ALP to an historic fifth term of Government in March 1993. As Prime Minister he continued his progressive reform program which included the establishment of a National Training Authority, a national superannuation scheme to redress low national savings and labour market and training reforms that addressed Australia's long-term unemployment problems. The Keating Government also implemented the historic Mabo legislation recognising the land rights of Australia's Indigenous people and the introduction of legislation ensuring protection of endangered species. Keating raised proposals for constitutional reform to make Australia a Republic.

During his period as Prime Minister, Keating established Australia's compulsory private savings scheme, known as superannuation, which has grown from $40 billion to $1 trillion over the twenty one years since its inception. During his Prime Ministership, Mr Keating established the APEC leaders' meeting, the principal piece of political architecture in the Asia-Pacific.

Foreign policy under the Keating Government was focussed towards the Asian region. Keating took an active role in the establishment of APEC, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and initiated its annual leaders' meeting with its commitment to a regional free trade agenda.

Following the defeat of the ALP in March 1996, Keating resigned from Parliament. He continues to take a close interest in the national and international issues with which he was associated in public life. He is a frequent visitor to China and the Asian region.

Keating's book Engagement: Australia faces the Asia Pacific, which examines Australia's foreign policy objectives and achievements during his term as Prime Minister was translated into Japanese and into Chinese for publication by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is a regularly sought-after keynote speaker at international business and economic conferences. As a political commentator he contributes articles to newspapers and international journals that discuss international, economic and social issues.

Keating is a frequent visitor to China and the Asian region and a sought after keynote speaker at major domestic and international conferences. He is a most articulate speaker with a wealth of international financial, political and diplomatic experience and an acute contemporary insight into global affairs. He has an abiding interest in architecture, urban design and music.

Keating is currently a Visiting Professor of Public Policy at the University of New South Wales. He has been awarded honorary doctorates in law from Keio University in Tokyo, the National University of Singapore, and the University of New South Wales.