

## Background notes

# Australia's Aid Program

Australia's relationship with the world and its region, the Asia–Pacific, continues to evolve.

Until the 1960s, most of Australia's trade was with Britain and Australia fought with Britain in World War I and World War II.

Since then, Australia has built relations with the new states of the region including Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Vietnam and Cambodia. Trade links with countries in the Asian region have grown.

Through all of the changes since World War II, Australia has played a strong role as a global citizen. Australia was a founding member of the United Nations. Dr HV Evatt, an Australian jurist and politician, was elected President of the UN General Assembly at its Third Session from 1948-49.

There are a number of ways Australia acts as a global citizen. These include:

- active participation in the United Nations
- participating in UN peacekeeping forces (eg East Timor)
- providing aid to a range of countries (eg Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands)
- helping countries with their systems of government (eg Solomon Islands)
- promoting freer trade (eg free trade agreements with Thailand and Singapore)

Giving aid is a major component of this.

In the 2007–2008, Australia allocated \$3.2 billion in aid funding. Included in this is:

- \$138.8 to the Middle East and Central Asia
- \$458.8m to Indonesia
- \$355.9m to Papua New Guinea

For more information, see Australia's Aid program 2007–08  
<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/budget07/summary07.cfm>

Australia spends 0.3% of its total income (Gross Domestic Product) on aid.