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Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia
June 18, 2007

Dear Secretary

Re: Submission to the Inquiry into the nature and conduct of Australia's public diplomacy

Please find enclosed a pen-ultimate draft of the Advance White Paper into “Utilising the networks formed by Australian professionals overseas to the country’s long term advantage”. The paper was developed as an outcome of the Advance 100 Global Australians Summit. In December 2006, 100 influential Australians returned to Sydney to attend the Advance 100 Global Australians Summit. The Summit brought together an outstanding group of Australians: CEOs of Fortune 500 companies, Nobel Prize winning scientists, an astronaut, entrepreneurs, prima ballerinas, writers, arts producers, curators and leaders of global humanitarian organisations. Their participation in the Summit showed the strength of their ties to Australia and their interest in identifying ways to contribute to Australia’s future, albeit from afar.

I have also included a delegate book from the Summit which records all of the attendees from around the world as well as the speakers.

The Prime Minister and the Treasurer both addressed the Summit attendees, welcoming them home, celebrating their achievements and encouraging their efforts to work with their onshore peers to consider how Australia might be better able to utilise the expatriate talent, skills and connections for the national benefit.

Advance sees a significant opportunity for Australia’s public diplomacy strategy to incorporate the use of leading Australians overseas.

- The Advance 100 remain strongly connected to and well disposed to this country. Leading Australians overseas are a highly mobile group moving between countries. They have extensive networks and spheres of influence. Leading Australians overseas should be considered a major element in Australia’s public diplomacy kit bag. They are currently almost totally unused with little global application of their talents and resources to Australia’s public diplomacy objectives.

- Leading Australians overseas present a dynamic and rich portrait of contemporary Australia (the arts, humanitarian leadership, science, financial services, general management, technology, media) which compliments other images of Australia and its primacy in sport and entertainment. It is important that this community is embraced in the national conversation and national spirit.
- Australians overseas at the pinnacle of their careers would like to play more of a role in Australia's future in both a general and in industry specific ways. They possess the capacity to influence investment, trade and philanthropic flows from overseas and to contribute to important national debates (particularly in higher education; the development of innovative industries and capital markets policies). It is time to capitalise on the talent and goodwill of leading Australians overseas with the right mechanisms and investment to leverage this national resource.
- The Advance 100 reinforced the importance to Australia of marketing our national capabilities and resources including global centres of excellence in research, business, education and financial services. There is more to Australia than being a great tourism destination and our international marketing and public diplomacy need to reflect this.
- The technology and communications infrastructure now exists to sustain and support a global community of Australian professionals organised by industry groups and connected to Australia. Australians are able to stay informed about Australia, read newspapers and maintain networks in Australia. The quality and potential outcomes of developing this network are enriched by the technology.

In our White Paper we make explicit recommendation relevant to this current inquiry:

RECOMMENDATION 4 - Public Diplomacy

Extend programmes which leverage leading Australian professionals around the world as a major public diplomacy asset, assisting in the promotion of Australia as an excellent trade, investment, education and tourism destination.

We would be pleased to provide any additional information deemed of use to the inquiry from our extensive experience working with Australians overseas in fulfilling Australia's broader public diplomacy objectives.

Yours sincerely,



Elena Douglas
Chief Executive Officer
Advance - Global Australian Professionals Inc

Advance is a community of Australian professionals overseas headquartered in New York City, with established chapters in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington DC and London with

several others in formation around the globe. Advance recognises the importance of maintaining connection with the one million Australians in our diaspora making their mark in boardrooms, science laboratories, arts institutions, classrooms and communities worldwide. We provide online and live services and events in major industry sectors, enabling Australians abroad to be informed ambassadors-at-large who open doors and opportunities for Australia and Australians across the globe. Advance is an independent not-for-profit and runs a Charitable and Educational Fund in the United States.