



## AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION ISLAMABAD

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### Media Release

#### Australia farewells more scholars

Australia is a strong supporter of Pakistan's democracy, election process and democratic institutions, the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr Peter Heyward said at a farewell function for 20 Pakistani Parliamentary Officers at the Serena Hotel today.

The Parliamentary Officers will visit Australia to undertake an intensive course on Management of Parliamentary Committees at the University of Queensland (UQ) under the Australia Awards Program. They come from Federal and Provincial assemblies.



Wishing the officers every success, Mr Heyward said Australia and Pakistan both had strong traditions of parliamentary service and similar federal systems.

“This Australia Awards program is very important for strengthening parliamentary procedures and developing Pakistan's democratic institutions,” Mr Heyward said.

“Our support of democracy in Pakistan also includes regular exchanges of parliamentarians at both the federal and provincial level, and we contributed over \$7 million to Pakistan's successful elections in 2013,” the High Commissioner said.

“Pakistan's parliamentary committees have great potential to support parliamentarians and government, with much depending on their effective and efficient management,” he said. “Australia is in a similar position and is happy to share our knowhow and experience with Pakistan through study programs such as the UQ short course.”

Parliamentary Secretary for the Interior and Narcotics Control the Honourable Ms Marriyum Aurangzeb said she hoped the knowledge the scholars gained will strengthen parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.

“Take this opportunity to learn about how parliamentary committees are managed in Australia with a view to adapting these techniques in Pakistan”, she told the scholars.

The Australia Awards is a scholarship program that aims to develop the technical and leadership skills of individuals who can contribute to the development of Pakistan. It also helps build people-to-people linkages and the individual, institutional and country levels.

Since 2012 Australia has awarded 95 short course awards to Pakistani professionals allowing them to complete a professional development activity at an Australian institution. Australia has been providing scholarships to Pakistan since 1991.

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