



Australian High Commission

Kenya

Australian Alumni Welcome Home Function, Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel, Nairobi 18th March 2015

Talking Points by HE John Feakes, Australian High Commissioner to Kenya

Welcome home and congratulations on all your achievements in Australia, I trust there was some time for fun amongst all the hard work. And most importantly, welcome into the Australian family. I am always delighted to meet with our alumni- you bring an energy and excitement to Australia's work in Kenya and help us greatly with our job of building lasting relationships here.

I understand there have been some great presentations today on your work, and I look forward to hearing about those at lunch and in our network session shortly.

You all understand the main aim of Australia Awards - to promote knowledge, education links and enduring ties between Australia and our neighbours and to build the new generation of global leaders.

Australia Awards are the flagship of the Australian development cooperation program and are an important component of Australia's investment in Kenya.

The Awards have always been a strong part of Australia's engagement in Africa.

- We have supported over 5000 students from Africa in Australia, many of whom are now in senior leadership positions and positively shaping their countries' future.

In Africa, the Australia Awards program is not only central to our efforts to support development; it is also a major part of our efforts to promote women's leadership and economic empowerment.

- Given how critical this issue is, I will be interested in hearing how your work will improve the lives of Kenyan women and girls, now that you are back at work.

In 2014, the Australian Government offered over 300 Africa Fellowships across over 30 African countries and in 2015, Australia will offer over 100 Masters' awards across 11 African countries.

Our Australia Awards program produces alumni who will lead progress in their country's development.

- Alumni like you are vital to the relationship between Australia and Africa and maximise opportunities for cooperation in business, trade and development.
- We hope that you will also be part of an enduring network in your fields, both within Africa, and between African and Australian people and organisations

Thanks again to you all for your hard work.

- I urge you to take this opportunity to use your new-found knowledge and skills in your jobs here.
- I understand that you all have work plans following the course – I encourage you all to work consistently towards implementing them.
- The most important part of your courses starts now. It can be difficult to implement change and make a real difference, but I know you can rise to this challenge.

Please keep in touch with us at the Australian High Commission in Nairobi and also with the larger Australian Awards family.