MILLS PUSHES DARWIN AS ASIAN MEETING PLACE

December 7th, 2012

Chief Minister, Terry Mills, has used today’s Council of Australia Governments (COAG) meeting in Canberra to push Darwin as a strategic meeting place between Australia and Indonesia.

“I advised the Prime Minister and State and Territory leaders that my government is positioned to make Darwin and the Northern Territory national leaders in Asian engagement,” Mr Mills said.

“The Territory’s response to the Asian Century White Paper includes a strategic assessment of key infrastructure particularly the Darwin Port, a focus on Asian languages in our schools and the establishment of the AusIndo Forum in partnership with CDU.

“I put it to COAG that the AusIndo Forum could be a vehicle to establish Darwin as the meeting place between Australia and Indonesia.

“A place where business leaders, academics, politicians and artists could meet and develop a better understanding of each other, which could avoid incidents like the recent live cattle trade bans for example.

“I am pleased that the offer of Darwin as the meeting place between Australian and Indonesia was supported by the Prime Minister and well received by members of COAG.

“I will certainly be conveying this information to senior government officials and business leaders when I visit Jakarta next week.”

Mr Mills joined COAG in signing an agreement to roll out an initial trial phase of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

“We support the reform and although along with WA we’re not a trial site we’ll begin preparing for implementation and learn from the experiences of the initial phase as it is ultimately implemented in the Territory,” Mr Mills said.

Among other items agreed on today by COAG was the Energy Market Reforms.

While the Northern Territory and Western Australia are not part of the Eastern grid and are therefore not affected by the reform, Mr Mills said he would still keep a watchful on the reforms to see how they could benefit his Government’s current review of Power Water Corporation.

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