BUILDING BONDS WITH ASIA

4th December, 2012

The Mills Government is taking action to rejuvenate the important relationship between the Northern Territory and Indonesia.

In the Mini Budget, $500,000 a year has been allocated for the AusIndo Forum from 2012-13 to 2015-16.

The Forum will be established by the Government working with Charles Darwin University and will be designed to build and strengthen the relationship between Australia and Indonesia.

Chief Minister, Terry Mills, said the Forum will give leaders from both countries an opportunity to liaise, share knowledge and set foundations for joint projects.

“Indonesia is our neighbour, we are close to them geographically, it is important we have respect for each other and build friendly and strong links,” Mr Mills said.

“For 11 years the Territory turned its back on Asia while other southern states strengthened their engagement with the region. However, I believe the Territory, through the Forum, can restore it and put strong ties back in place.”

In the Mini Budget $516,000 has also been provided to establish the Office of Asian Engagement this year, with $291,000 ongoing from 2013-14.

“We are close to Asia, and there is a strong desire both here and in Asia to cement our links for business and trade,” Mr Mills said.

“We are already seeing significant growth in major projects in the Territory with investment from several big Asian economies.

“My Government is committed to re-engaging with Asia once more.”

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