**24 January 2020**

**[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]**

 **Australian High Commission Malaysia celebrates Australia Day 2020**

On 22 January, the Australian High Commission held its signature Australia Day reception at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. Over 1,600 guests attended the event, including Ministers, Members of Parliament, civil society, the business community and the diplomatic corps. The Honourable Baru Bian, Minister of Works, was the guest of honour and senior Malaysian Government representative.

This year’s Australia Day reception came in the wake of the devastating bushfires across Australia. In his welcoming address, Australia’s High Commissioner to Malaysia, His Excellency Andrew Goledzinowski, acknowledged the generous response of the Malaysian Government and people to the bushfire crisis. Andrew said, “*in any national crisis, in any emergency, there are two things that you learn. The first thing is you’re reminded of who your friends are. And it turns out, we have a lot of friends in Malaysia. My colleagues and I have been literally overwhelmed with the expressions of sympathy, encouragement, and the offers of practical assistance.”*

Each year, Australia Day events around the world provide an opportunity to celebrate what is great about Australia – our diversity, culture, lifestyle, and the freedoms all Australians enjoy.

Guests at the event in Kuala Lumpur had the opportunity to sample some of the outstanding Australian produce available in Malaysia, including succulent seafood, classic Australian desserts, fine Australian wines, as well as premium meat provided by our Australia Day event partners, Meat & Livestock Australia.

The High Commissioner also launched *Australia now* 2020 in Malaysia, the Australian Government’s flagship public diplomacy program, held in just one country each year. *Australia now* will coincide with Malaysia’s year as APEC host and *Visit Malaysia 2020*. The *Australia now* program will celebrate our vibrant partnerships with the Malaysian Government, civil society institutions, as well as showcase the strength of our people-to-people links.

The event sponsors, without whom such an event would not be possible, were Blackmores, Curtin University, UNSW, BHP, CPA Australia, Lynas Malaysia, Ecoworld, Swinburne University of Technology, Meat and Livestock Australia, Monash University Malaysia, OSK Property, Lendlease, AirAsia, UOW-KDU Malaysia, Aavii, Bluescope, Paradox Coffee Roasters, ANZ, and the Australian International School Malaysia.

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