Dialogue to strengthen the relationship between Thailand and Australia

Wed 21 - Thurs 22 September 2022
Delegation heads

Kitti Wasinondh

*Head, Thailand delegation*

Kitti Wasinondh is Senator, Chair of Senate Sub-Committee on ASEAN & Regional Cooperation, First Vice Chair of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, former Ambassador to the United Kingdom, former Director-General of ASEAN Department and Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and former Consul-General in Sydney.

Allan Gyngell AO

*Head, Australian delegation*

Allan Gyngell AO was appointed the National President of the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) in September 2017. He is an honorary professor with the Australian National University’s College of Asia and the Pacific and a Director of China Matters. Mr. Gyngell was the Director-General of the Australian Office of National Assessments (ONA) from 2009 to 2013. Prior to leading the ONA, he was the founding Executive Director of the Lowy Institute for International Policy from 2003 to 2009. Additionally, he has worked at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, serving as an Australian diplomat in Yangon, Singapore and Washington. An updated edition of his history of Australian foreign policy, *Fear of Abandonment: Australia in the World since 1942*, was published in 2021.
Program convenors

Gregory Raymond
Australian National University

Gregory Raymond is a lecturer in the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, researching Southeast Asian politics and foreign relations. He is the author of *Thai Military Power: A Culture of Strategic Accommodation* and *The United States-Thai Alliance: History, Memory and Current Developments*. His work has been published in several journals including Contemporary Southeast Asia, South East Asia Research and the Journal of Cold War Studies. Before joining the Australian National University, Greg was a policy advisor in the Australian Government, including the Department of Defence and the Australian Embassy in Bangkok.

Thomas Parks
The Asia Foundation

Mr. Parks has worked in Asia for more than 20 years on geopolitics, economic development, conflict & fragility, and regional cooperation. He originally joined the Asia Foundation in 2001, and has served in various headquarters and field-based roles. He currently manages the Foundation's programs in Thailand, as well as overseeing programs with ASEAN and Mekong subregion cooperation. Mr. Parks is currently a Distinguished Visitor at the Australian National University, and a Visiting Scholar at Waseda University in Tokyo. He spent four years with Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) where he served as Senior Governance and Fragility Specialist from 2013 to 2017.

Benjamin Zawacki
The Asia Foundation

Benjamin Zawacki is a senior program specialist at The Asia Foundation, where he manages programs on regional maritime security, the Mekong subregion, the US-Thailand relationship, and geopolitics. Zawacki is a 2022-23 Mansfield-Luce Asia Scholar and the author of *Thailand: Shifting Ground Between the US and a Rising China* (Bloomsbury). He was a term member on the Council on Foreign Relations through 2016 and a Visiting Fellow at Harvard Law School's Human Rights Program in 2014-2015.
| Time       | Session Title                                                      | Moderator(s)                                           | Speakers                                                                 | Objectives                                                                                     | Topics May Include                                                                 |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9.00 - 9.15| Welcome remarks and introduction of heads of delegations          | Gregory Raymond, Thomas Parks                          |                                                                           |                                                                                                 |
| 9.15 - 9.35| Opening remarks by heads of delegations                           | Allan Gyngell, Kitti Wasinondh                         |                                                                           |                                                                                                 |
| 9.35 - 11.05| Session 1: Setting the geopolitical scene                         | Gregory Raymond                                        | Michelle Chan, Busaya Mathelin, John McCarthy, Kavi Chongkittavorn, Susannah Paton | 1. Clarify commonalities and differences in strategic outlooks  
2. Identify areas of shared strategic interest between Thailand and Australia | Emerging challenges – Myanmar, Ukraine, Taiwan  
Geopolitical competition  
Changing regional architecture – ASEAN, Quad, AUKUS |
| 11.05 - 11.20| Group photo and morning tea                                       |                                                        |                                                                           |                                                                                                 |
| 11.20 - 12.20| Session 2: Current state of bilateral relationship                | Thomas Parks                                           | Ambassador Busadee Santipitaks, Ambassador Angela MacDonald, Jittipat Poonkham | 1. Provide overview of milestones, joint initiatives and areas of cooperation  
2. Contextualise current state of relationship | History and evolution of the bilateral relationship  
Bilateral cooperation – Strategic partnership, priorities, current joint initiatives  
Impact of recent developments – Covid, AUKUS, Myanmar |
| 12.20 - 13.45| Lunch                                                             |                                                        |                                                                           |                                                                                                 |
**Program**

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| 13.45 - 15.00   | **Session 3: Shared interests and cooperation in the Mekong subregion** | **Moderator:** Benjamin Zawacki | **Speakers:** Ambassador Arunrung Phothong Humphreys, Jenny da Rin, Melissa Conley Tyler | **Objectives:** 1. Assess opportunities for Thai-Australian cooperation  
2. Prioritise needs and partnership models | 1. Subregional architecture – ACMECS, Mekong-Australia partnership  
2. Development needs – Environmental and ecological protection, connectivity, food security  
3. Australian development cooperation – Partnerships, relevance and adaption within geopolitical context, trilateral cooperation  
4. Thai development cooperation – Role in the Mekong subregion and ASEAN |
| 15.00 - 15.15   | **Afternoon tea**                                                        |                            |                                                                         |                                                                            |                                                                                      |
| 15.15 - 16.45   | **Session 4: Climate and energy**                                        | **Moderator:** Hayley Channer | **Speakers:** Poonpat Leesombatpiboon, David Higgins, Tanachat Pochana, John Dore | **Objectives:** 1. Assess energy sector evolution in Thailand and mainland Southeast Asia  
2. Identify areas of common interest and future cooperation | 1. Energy sources and transition  
2. Private sector priorities  
3. Australia technology and models  
4. Climate change commitments |
| 16.45 - 17.00   | **Reflections on day 1**                                                 | Allan Gyngell and Kittit Wasinondh |                                                                         |                                                                            |                                                                                      |
# Program

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<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Thursday 22 September 2022</th>
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| 9.00 - 9.20 | Moment of reflection on the passing of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II  
Brief summary of day 1 by organising team |
| 9.20 - 10.35 | Session 5: Security challenges and cooperation  
*Moderator: Susannah Patton*  
*Speakers: John Blaxland, General Somsak Roongsita, Hayley Channer, Anucha Chintakanond*  
**Objectives:**  
1. Identify shared priorities for regional security in Southeast Asia  
2. Prioritise future areas of cooperation  
**Topics may include:**  
- Deepening military–Military cooperation  
- Traditional threats–Regional conflict, maritime security  
- Transnational crime–Drugs, trafficking-in-persons, smuggling  
- Non-traditional and asymmetrical threats–Cybersecurity, terrorism, climate-induced and humanitarian crises |
| 10.35 - 10.55 | Morning tea |
| 10.55 - 12.10 | Session 6: Thai-Australian economic relations  
*Moderator: Anucha Chintakanond*  
*Speakers: Peter Warr, Suthad Setboonsarng, Simon Lacey*  
**Objectives:**  
1. Identify shared priorities for economic growth and deeper integration  
2. Prioritise future areas of cooperation  
**Topics may include:**  
- Global economic downturn–Covid, inflation, energy prices, slowing Chinese economy, uncertainty from conflict in Ukraine  
- Trade relationship–Current data, challenges in expanding trade, free trade agreements  
- Foreign direct Investment–Recent trends, factors that affect investment  
- Currency-related challenges–Inflation, financial markets, barriers to integration  
- Non-traditional economic challenges–Public health, food security, microchips |
## Program

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<td>12.10 - 13.15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>13.15 - 14.45</td>
<td><strong>Session 7: Expanding economic linkages</strong></td>
<td>Melissa Conley Tyler</td>
<td>Phairush Burapachaisri, Chris Barnes, Tanachat Pochana, Sithee Tanboonteck</td>
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<td><strong>Objectives:</strong></td>
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<td>1. Identify critical factors that could expand economic linkages</td>
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<td>• Key areas of opportunity in the private sector</td>
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<td>• Government options for increasing private sector linkages</td>
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<td>• Constraints to deeper economic integration</td>
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<td>14.45 - 15.00</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon tea</strong></td>
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<td>15.00 - 16.15</td>
<td><strong>Session 8: Next steps for growing the relationship</strong></td>
<td>Thomas Parks</td>
<td>Busaya Mathelin, Susannah Patton, Suthad Setboonsarng, Benjamin Zawacki</td>
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<td><strong>Objectives:</strong></td>
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<td>1. Prioritise existing areas of shared interest and future cooperation</td>
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<td>2. Identify additional priorities for Thai-Australian cooperation</td>
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<td>16.15 - 16.40</td>
<td><strong>Summary and reflections</strong></td>
<td>Gregory Raymond</td>
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<td>Jittipat Poonkham</td>
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<td>16.40 - 17.00</td>
<td><strong>Closing remarks</strong></td>
<td>Allan Gyngell</td>
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<td>Kitti Wasinondh</td>
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Australian delegation

**Angela MacDonald** is a senior career officer of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Before arriving in Thailand, she served as First Assistant Secretary of Middle East and Africa Division. She has served overseas as Deputy Head of Mission at the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Deputy Head of Mission at the Australian Embassy in Kabul and on postings to Brussels and Wellington. In Canberra, she has worked in the International Division, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C), Crisis Management Branch and Parliamentary and Media Branch in DFAT as Executive Officer to the Secretary of PM&C and Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Chris Barnes** leads the trade policy and international relations team at the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI). He is responsible for trade and international policy and relationships with key international partners including the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Business at the OECD (BIAC) and the Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce Industry (CACCI). He also manages the Certificate of Origin (COO) program, which is an important revenue source for ACCI.

**David Higgins** is the General Manager of the International Climate Change Branch in the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. He led DFAT’s InnovationXchange and created a specialist data analytics unit to support the Department’s Executive in managing DFAT’s COVID-19 operations. He has served as Advisor to the Executive Director at the World Bank. He was instrumental in securing agreement to Australia’s pledge to the Green Climate Fund in 2014 and ran the successful campaign to secure the Co-Chairmanship of the Board for Australia in 2015. He was previously the head of DFAT’s Green Climate Fund Taskforce.

**Hayley Channer** produces analysis on Australia’s foreign and defence policy in the Indo-Pacific, drawing from her experience in Defence, Parliament House, think tanks and non-profits. She has previously worked for the Department of Defence and has advised senior Australian and US military officials. Hayley has directly advised Australia’s Defence Minister, produced analysis for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), and coordinated government relations for Australia’s largest non-profit organisation, World Vision. Hayley is a Fulbright Scholar and has held Visiting Fellowships with the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) at the Australian National University and East West Centre in Washington DC.
Australian delegation

**John Blaxland** is Professor of International Security and Intelligence Studies in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC), Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs at the Australian National University (ANU). He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales. He has previously been a Chief Intelligence Staff Officer at HQ Joint Operations Command, defence attaché to Thailand and Myanmar, Head of SDSC and Director of the ANU Southeast Asia Institute. He is co-author (With Dr Greg Raymond) of *The US-Thai Alliance and Asian International Relations* (Routledge, 2020).

**Jenny da Rin** is Assistant Secretary, Southeast Asia Development Policy and Programs Branch in the Office of Southeast Asia, DFAT. She was previously Minister Counsellor, Political and Strategic Communications at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. She has also served as Head of Mission in Ethiopia and Vanuatu and as an Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. She holds a Master of Laws from the Australian National University.

**John Dore** is DFAT’s Lead Water Specialist and Lead Advisor for Mekong Australia Partnership elements concerned with water security, energy transition, climate action and related Mekong geopolitics. John works primarily across Asia and is involved in many of Australia’s bilateral and regional engagements including government-to-government partnerships and alliances with industry and civil society. In Thailand, John is active in practical co-operations with MOEN, ONEP, ONWR, RID and Thai universities. He is also an Honorary Associate Professor at the ANU College of Science (Fenner School) and has published widely on sustainable regional development, deliberative governance and transboundary water and electricity politics.

**John McCarthy** is a Vice Chancellor’s Fellow at the University of Melbourne. He is Senior Advisor for Asialink and Mitsubishi Materials Corporation, Tokyo. He was formerly National President of Australian Institute of International Affairs; a Sugden Fellow at Queens College Melbourne; Chair of Australia-India Council and co-convenor of Australia-Indonesia Dialogue. McCarthy has served as Australian ambassador to Vietnam, Mexico, Thailand, United States, Indonesia, Japan and as High Commissioner to India.
Australian delegation

**Melissa Conley Tyler** is the Executive Director at Asia Pacific Development, Diplomacy and Development Dialogue (AP4D). She was the National Executive Director of the Australian Institute of International Affairs. She joined the University of Melbourne in 2019 as Director of Diplomacy at Asialink and then as a Research Fellow/Associate in the Asia Institute. Most recently she was a Visiting Fellow in Taiwan at the Ministry of Defence’s think tank, the Institute of Defence and National Security Research. Melissa has extensive experience establishing and sustaining Australia-Asia engagement through Track II dialogues involving government officials, academics, media and business.

**Michelle Chan** is the Deputy Secretary, Southeast Asia and Global Partners Group, in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She is Australia’s ASEAN, East Asia Summit and ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Official. Ms. Chan has extensive experience in foreign policy, diplomacy, national security and intelligence, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region. Prior to assuming her current role, Ms. Chan was the Deputy Secretary National Security and International Policy in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and was the National Security Adviser and Senior International Adviser to the Prime Minister.

**Peter Warr** is an Emeritus Professor at ANU Crawford School of Public Policy. After receiving his PhD from Stanford University in 1974 he was Postdoctoral Fellow in International Trade and Economic Development at the University of Minnesota and then taught economics at Monash University from 1976-79. After a visiting appointment at Yale University’s Economic Growth Center, he joined the ANU in 1980. He was Executive Director of the ANU National Thai Studies Centre for several years. His research has dealt mainly with the relationship between economic policy and poverty incidence within Asia.

**Robyn Mudie** is the First Assistant Secretary at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and former Ambassador to Vietnam. She has previously served overseas as Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Maldives (2012-16); Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Geneva); First Secretary, UN Permanent Mission, New York; and Second Secretary, Hanoi. Ms. Mudie was the inaugural Executive Director of the DFAT Diplomatic Academy and has served as Assistant Secretary, Public Diplomacy Branch; Assistant Secretary, Information Resources Branch; and Director, Strategic Policy Section.
Australian delegation

Simon Fellows is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and is currently Assistant Secretary, Southeast Asia Mainland Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. His previous roles have included Assistant Secretary, Myanmar Taskforce; Director Myanmar Taskforce; Director East Asia Summit and Regional Architecture Section; and Adviser Southeast Asia at the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. He has served overseas as Deputy Head of Mission in Kabul and Phnom Penh, with an earlier posting to Port Moresby.

Susannah Patton is Director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Lowy Institute and the Project Lead for the Asia Power Index. Her commentary and analysis has featured in reputed outlets, including the New York Times, Foreign Policy, Australian Financial Review and The Interpreter. She has worked in various Southeast Asia-focused positions in the Australian government, including as a Senior Analyst at the Office of National Intelligence, in the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit Taskforce in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and as a diplomat in the Australian Embassy in Bangkok.

Simon Lacey is currently Senior Lecturer at the University of Adelaide’s Institute for International Trade. Prior to joining the Institute, Simon held the position of Vice-President Trade Facilitation and Market Access at Huawei Technologies in Shenzhen China, where he was responsible for monitoring, managing and mitigating the biggest trade and investment risks facing the company across a dozen of its most important markets internationally. Before joining Huawei, Simon worked in over 30 countries providing training and advice in the areas of trade and investment policy to both sovereigns and the private sector.
Thailand delegation

**Ambassador Arunrung Phothong Humphreys** is attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs overseeing Mekong Cooperation. As the first thematic ambassador ever appointed, she is the Thai Senior Official for ACMECS, MLC, MUSP, and other Mekong subregional cooperation framework. Ambassador Arunrung joined the Ministry in 1993 and has served as Thailand’s Ambassador to Bangladesh and Deputy Director-General of the Department of East Asia Affairs. Her postings also include Thailand Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, India and Belgium.

**Anucha Chintakanond** is a Principal Adviser to Prime Ministers, Ministers and House and Senate Committees. He has been overseeing advisory councils / committees and functioning as chief of the advisory staff. Presently, he is Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Committee on National Security and Chairman of its sub-committee responsible for submitting facts and proposals to the Prime Minister / Deputy Prime Minister. He is Acting President of the American Studies Association in Thailand (ASAT) and an Honorary Member of the Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce.

**Ambassador Busadee Santipitaks** is Ambassador of Thailand to Australia. She has previously served as Director-General of the Department of Information and Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to ASEAN in Jakarta. Ambassador Busadee also worked at the Department of ASEAN Affairs, Department of European Affairs, the Department of International Organisations and the Department of American and South Pacific Affairs, and had other overseas assignments at the Royal Thai Embassy, Brussels, and the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, New York.

**Busaya Mathelin** was the first female Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. She began her career at the Department of Political Affairs in 1986. She also served as Thailand's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, and Senegal. She currently serves on the board of several Thai companies including Frasers Property, and Thai Beverage Public Company. She is also Advisor to the International Studies Center, Advisor to the Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs, and Member of the Board of Directors, Thailand Foundation.
Thailand delegation

**Jittipat Poonkham** is Associate Professor of International Relations, Associate Dean for International Affairs and Director of International Studies Program in the Faculty of Political Science at Thammasat University. He is an author of *A Genealogy Of Bamboo Diplomacy: The Politics of Thai Détente with Russia and China* (ANU Press 2022) and a co-editor of *International Relations as a Discipline in Thailand: Theory and Sub-fields* (Routledge 2019).

**Kavi Chongkittavorn** is a columnist at the Bangkok Post, and Senior Fellow at the Institute for Strategic and International Studies, Chulalongkorn University. He has served as Special Assistant to the Secretary General of ASEAN from 1995 to 1996. Kavi was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University from 2001 to 2002 and president of the UNESCO Guillermo Carno World Press Freedom Prize jury from 2004 to 2007. He is the current affairs commentator of Nation News Channel’s One World Program.

**Phairush Burapachaisri** is the Chairman and CEO of Pin Siam's group of companies. He has previously worked as an assistant electrical engineer at Wichita State University in the US. He is an Honorary Consul of Republic of Botswana to the Kingdom of Thailand and Vice Chairman at the Board of Trade of Thailand and Thai Chamber of Commerce. He has previously held the position of Chairman of Thai Kenya Business Council. He has served as a Board Member for various Ministries of the Thai Government. He is also a Member of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand.

**Poonpat Leesombatpiboon** started his career as a civil servant at National Energy Policy Office. He served as an academic advisory team to senior government officials. He was the recipient of a scholarship from the Royal Thai Government to complete his PhD in Economics at George Washington University. While studying, he served as a consultant at the World Bank. He later returned to Ministry of Energy and took the role of Chief, Strategic International Energy Cooperation with the focus on promoting the relations and partnership between Thailand and several countries.
Thailand delegation

**General Somsak Roongsita** currently serves as Chairman of National Strategy Drafting Committee on National Security. He is also a Director of Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) Board. General Somsak Roongsita held many key positions at the Royal Thai Army’s Directorate of Operations, including Director of Training and Exercises Division, Director of Force Structure Division, and Director of Policy and Planning Division. At the Ministry of Defence, his notable assignments included Director-General of Policy and Planning Office and Deputy Permanent Secretary for Defence. Before his retirement, General Somsak Roongsita served his country as Secretary-General of National Security Council.

**Suthad Setboonsarn** is an Independent Director of Banpu Plc. and Somboon Advanced Technology Plc. He was a former Chairman of the Board of Trustees, International Rice Research Institute, Chairman of the Audit Committee, Bank of Thailand, a member of the National Reform Council of Thailand and a Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers. He was also the first Thai Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN.

**Sithee Tanboonteck** is Director at the Thailand Board of Investment and Investment Consul of the Thai Consulate-General in Sydney. She is responsible for bilateral investment promotion between Australia and Thailand and New Zealand and Thailand, providing useful investment information and services, and offering business support and investment incentives to foreign investors in Thailand. She is also the Investment Promotion Officer in the Agricultural and Light Industries Investment Promotion Division, Creative and Digital Industries Investment Promotion Division and Agricultural, Biotechnology and Medical Industries Investment Promotion Division.

**Tanachat Pochana** started his career in Endress & Hauser. During that time, he also started his own renewable energy business within the CLMV subregion, remarkably in Laos where he set up the national telecommunication backbone system with 100% renewable energy. In 2006, Mr. Tanachat founded Energy Serv, later Enserv Group. He started to develop and engage more in very small power producers (VSPP). He is known as a major solar developer and independent power producer (IPP) in Thailand.