MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Hon Julie Bishop MP

21 March 2017

AMBASSADOR TO NEPAL

Today I announce the appointment of Mr Peter Budd as Australia's next Ambassador to Nepal.

Australia and Nepal enjoy a warm relationship underpinned by strong people-to-people links. Nepal is the eighth largest provider of international students to Australia, with over 15,000 Nepalese students enrolling to study in Australia last year. In 2016 more than 25,000 Australians visited Nepal.

Our trade relationship with Nepal is continuing to grow, with two-way trade in goods and services valued at over $800 million in 2015-16.

The Australian Government is providing $34 million in official development assistance to Nepal in 2016-17. Our aid is focussed on improving basic education, expanding economic opportunities for the poor, and supporting the Government of Nepal improve governance and policy implementation. Australia is also continuing its recovery programs following the 2015 earthquakes.

Mr Budd is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). He has served overseas as Deputy Head of Mission in Baghdad, Pretoria and Port Vila. In Canberra, Mr Budd was most recently Director, Property Tender Unit and Estate Section. He has also served as Director, Pacific Regional Section and Director, Fiji Taskforce. Mr Budd holds a Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) from the University of Melbourne.

I thank outgoing Ambassador Glenn White for his significant contribution since 2013 to advancing Australia's interests in Nepal and his important role in managing Australia's consular and humanitarian response to the devastating 2015 earthquakes.

Foreign Minister's Office: *Rachel Obradovic 0478 488 874*
Phoebe Nolan 0408 275 340