



**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP
THE HON JULIE BISHOP MP**

**THE HON JULIE BISHOP MP
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY**

**THE GREAT HALL
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA
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Julie Bishop:

What a joy it is to be here today to celebrate International women's Day, albeit a week in advance. This is a global celebration of women. We honour those women who have been trailblazers. We demonstrate our support for women who face challenges, and we seek to find ways to inspire future generations of women and girls to fulfil their potential. I particularly want to thank Frances Adamson as the President of the Institute of Public Administration here in Australia. She exemplifies the twin pillars of excellence and professionalism that this Institute seeks to embed in Australia's public service. Frances had a distinguished career as a diplomat, she was our ambassador in Beijing, one of the most demanding posts in our foreign service.

She was international adviser to the Prime Minister, and then quite naturally in my eyes, she took on the role of the first female Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Australia's history, and it just so happens that her time of service coincides with my time as Australia's first female foreign minister. We work exceedingly well together and I'm very proud of the way we have been able to institute change in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that will impact across the Australian government public service.

As a foreign minister, I travel constantly representing Australia's interests on the world stage, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade invariably puts together an exceedingly busy schedule for me wherever I am. I demand it and they deliver. But they are also aware that I want to have in my itinerary wherever I am in the world, an opportunity to meet with the women leaders in that city or that country that I'm visiting. Over the years I have met some of the most extraordinary women at lunches and dinners and briefings, where our posts, our embassies and high commissions have brought together a cross-section of women from that country or city. What I learned from those meetings, all the briefings, all the ministerial meetings can never make up for hearing first-hand from women what life is like in that country.

While the stories and experiences are so diverse and vary so dramatically from country to country, continent to continent, there is an underlying theme. And that is whatever the gender equality statistics may or may not be for that country, there is still an overwhelming desire to see more women in leadership roles. Whether I'm in Samoa or the United Kingdom or Afghanistan or China, there is a desire to see more women take leadership roles in their families, in their villages, in their communities, in business, in commerce, in government at all levels. That's because women can make a significant difference to the betterment of society. After all, a nation that doesn't harness and utilise the talents and skills and perspectives and insights and intelligence of around 50% of its population will never reach its full potential.

I've also been very delighted to be part of a movement amongst the female foreign ministers of the world. Of the 193 members of the United Nations, 32 countries have female foreign ministers, and there's now an annual event on the side of the United Nations General Assembly Leaders Week, and for those of you who have attended UNGA Leaders Week, it is like speed dating on steroids. You meet minister after minister back to back day after day, but

the female foreign ministers have found time in this extraordinarily busy schedule to meet. A number of female foreign ministers are from significant nations and economies, the female foreign minister of India, Indonesia, Canada, Australia. We meet to discuss the issues of the day, but from our perspective as female foreign ministers.

We often say, "I wonder what Madeline Albright would have done in these circumstances," or Condoleezza Rice or Hillary Clinton, because without doubt the United States has produced some of the most outstanding Foreign Secretaries, Secretaries of State, in recent memory. But it's important for me to gain perspectives of other women in counterpart positions. It informs my thinking, it reinforces the views I have, and it drives me to ensure that Australia is embracing every tool available to us for gender equality, gender equity, and the empowerment of women in Australia and in the countries where we have influence. As Frances said, last year we released a Foreign Policy White Paper, and I take this opportunity to again publicly pay tribute to Frances and the team at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for producing a quite extraordinary document, the first in 14 years but without doubt the most comprehensive Foreign Policy White Paper in Australia's history.

This is a framework to guide our international engagement, our international activities, for the next decade and beyond. It is a detailed and thorough piece of work that should be read by foreign ministers around the world, and may I assure you it is being read by governments across the globe. Australia is an open liberal democracy, we embrace freedoms, the rule of law, democratic institutions. We're an open, export-oriented market economy. We depend for our standard of living, our economic growth, on our ability to sell our goods and services into markets around the world. Australia is entering its 27th consecutive year of economic growth, uninterrupted economic growth. That is a record unparalleled in the world. No other country, no other comparable economy, has ever achieved that. But it doesn't happen by accident and we want to ensure that Australia can continue to grow, continue to be a beacon of democratic values and an embrace of open and liberal trade and investment. Not to impose our model on others, but to be an example for those to follow who may see in Australia a case study for their country.

The Foreign Policy White Paper sets out our values, our priorities, our interests. Without doubt Australia's interests are very much global, but our priorities are very much regional. For the first time in a foreign policy document, we have embraced the term 'Indo-Pacific' to describe our part of the world, the Indian Ocean, Asia-Pacific, and this term, not just a term of art but a term that reflects the geostrategic and economic reality, is now being picked up by other major nations around the world. In fact in the United States' recent national security statement, they referred to the US presence in the Indo-Pacific. So this is our part of the world, and the Foreign Policy White Paper sets out the threats, the opportunities, the challenges, the risks, for Australia's international engagement.

In focusing on the Indo-Pacific, let me bring it down to the issue of gender equality. In the Pacific today, 7% of the members of parliament are female. In a major Pacific nation, Papua New Guinea, of some eight million people

with one hundred members in their national parliament, there are no women. This does not compare well with the global average of about 23%, 25% of national parliaments being made up of female members. We have embraced the empowerment of women as a key pillar in our foreign policy and in particular, our aid programme in the Pacific.

We do that under three headings. Support for more leadership, and we have practical initiatives and programmes to assist women in the Pacific become leaders in their communities, in their villages, in their parliaments. We have embraced the empowerment of women in economic terms, the economic empowerment of women, so that women can take their place in the formal labour markets of these countries. That they can make a contribution, that they can run businesses, that they can be involved in commerce and investment and trade, in activities. That of course means ensuring that health and education initiatives are equally supported. Our third pillar is to deal with the scourge of domestic violence, and the Pacific are not alone in this regard, although the incidence and prevalence is very high. All nations struggle with the issue of domestic violence, but the Indo-Pacific, the Pacific in particular, is our part of the world, is our neighbourhood. We must do what we can to ensure that women and girls are safe in their communities.

We have numerous programmes that focus on the empowerment of women, but you have to do things that have a practical outcome. I mandated that 80% of our aid programmes had to take into account the impact on women, to ensure that women got equal opportunities to take part in programmes, all these programmes would have an impact on women. Just a small example, we had a road-building project in Timor-Leste, and as part of the infrastructure programme we were training Timorese workers to drive bulldozers and tractors and be part of the construction work, gain skills that would be useful for them. The education component was made up entirely of men. We mandated, as I said, that 80% of their aid programme had to take into account the impact on women. So the programme was required to see if there were women who could fulfil these educational places. Now 30% of the road team on that project are women. They're learning how to drive vehicles, they're learning how to build roads, they're learning engineering techniques, they're developing skills.

So often it's just asking people to focus on the obvious. Recently in New York I launched a new initiative, women in leadership initiative in the Pacific, and I relaunched it back here in Canberra recently. This is based on the power of mentoring. What this programme does is through our Australia Awards programme ... many of you will know that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has for a long time run an Australia Awards programme whereby we provide scholarships to postgraduate students in countries in the region that come to Australia. They complete their qualifications, they go back home with an Australian qualification but a connection with Australia that will last a lifetime. So from that cohort of Australia Awards recipients, we've identified young women from the Pacific who have leadership potential, and we have connected them with an Australian female leader who is prepared to act as their mentor.

In this way, these young women who have gained an Australian qualification, have gone back home, will have a connection with Australia, a person who is

prepared to share their knowledge and experience, and support them externally, but somebody that they can rely on and call when they're looking for some advice or some support. One great example is Nirose Silas, she's an Australia Award recipient from Vanuatu. She studied here in Australia and her ambition is to be the Auditor General of Vanuatu. I thought, "Isn't that wonderful? You wake up one morning in Vanuatu and say, 'I want to be the Auditor General.'" We have connected her with the Chief Government Whip, Nola Marino, the Member for Forrest here in Parliament House. So Nirose and Nola are now mentor-mentee, and I have so many examples, and if there are any women in the room who would like to be part of this brilliant programme, Frances will certainly take your names and details.

This is an example of Australia sharing experiences in a practical and principled way, supporting people. I must say I believe absolutely in the power of mentoring, whether it's formal programmes ... When I was the Minister for Education, we observed a case study on mentoring in a South Australian university. They did a controlled experiment. A group of female academics were in a formal mentoring programme, a group of female academics were not in a formal mentoring programme. Over five years they tracked the progress of the two groups of women, and it was overwhelmingly in favour of the women who were in the mentoring programme in terms of promotions, in terms of grants, in terms of job satisfaction, the evidence was in. So I believe very much in the power of mentoring.

We have also recognised that we need to promote our policies and our agenda, supporting women around the world. I have had the honour of appointing two female Ambassadors for Women and Girls. The first was former Senator Natasha Stott Despoja, who after she left Parliament, continued in her advocacy against domestic violence with an impeccable international reputation. Natasha Stott Despoja was our Ambassador for Women and Girls for two years, and in that role she represented Australia around the world, particularly focusing on our region. Today I just got a text from her, she's in London where the Commonwealth have asked her to be on an electoral observer mission, such is her standing in the world today.

Our current Ambassador for Women and Girls is Doctor Sharman Stone, who was the member for Murray here in the Parliament, a very distinguished career as a parliamentarian and absolutely committed to the betterment of the lives of women in our Pacific, and she's doing a magnificent job. Hopefully there'll come a time when we won't need an office for women, we won't need an Ambassador for Women and Girls, but that time is not now, and we continue to promote and support activities to give women their voice, to give women the right to be heard, and to support them when they need that boost to their confidence, to their ability to fulfil their potential. Now, Frances mentioned the New Colombo Plan. This is my baby, the New Colombo Plan is a student programme that is run through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, where we provide support to undergraduates in Australia's universities to live and study and undertake a work experience or practicum, an internship in one of 40 countries in our region.

We commenced the programme in 2014 and by the end of this year, 30,000 Australian undergraduates will have been through our New Colombo Plan,

30,000. These are young people who will be our ambassadors, who are our ambassadors in our region. Not only are they having an extraordinary educational experience, of studying at a university in our region, but they're having an extraordinary cultural experience, living, working, with people in another country. But the benefit to Australia is profound. It's being run through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade because it is a foreign policy initiative. The next generation of young Australians will have a unique understanding of our part of the world. They will have connections and networks and friendships that can only benefit Australia as we engage in this part of the world.

And it's interesting to note that of the recipients of the scholarships, and that is 12-month scholarships, 54% of the recipients have been female. Of the mobility grants, which are shorter periods, a semester and sometimes it can be a matter of weeks, but they're shorter periods working in health clinics or in schools, or working in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in another country, 64% of the recipients are women. They will be such an attribute to us in years to come. I'm thinking of our New Colombo Plan scholar from the University of South Australia, Michelle Howie. She studied engineering, she got a place at the South Korean Institute of Technology, a highly prestigious institute. She studied engineering, she then worked for Telstra in Hong Kong, and she's now employed as an engineer in Telstra, all through the New Colombo Plan.

Frances also mentioned the Innovation Exchange, another initiative that we have introduced within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and I believe it is a case study for other departments across the Australian government. We have an ideas hub within the department, it's over the road from the R.G. Casey Building, so it's physically removed from ... how shall I put this ... the framework of the Department. We brought in some of their best and brightest thinkers from DFAT, from other departments, from the private sector, from overseas, from the World Bank, from Google, from USA. Frances, I offered a position to ... I thought I'd tell you this ... I offered a position to a bright young officer from DFID, from the UK aid department, to come to Australia. We'll work out the details later. This innovation exchange throws out the rule book, turns thinking on its head when it comes to overseas development assistance, starts with a blank sheet of paper and a problem, how would we solve this? Throwing out the old stereotypical thinking, what would we do to solve what is a seemingly intractable problem?

They come up with ideas, they hold hackathons, ideas challenges. We're now part of global challenges, coming up with an issue that needs to be resolved, how do we do it? The Australian government's prepared to put up seed funding for the best ideas from around the world, to implement development assistance programmes that actually make a difference on the ground. We were driven to do this because Australia has a significant aid budget. We invest heavily in our region, yet after billions and billions of dollars of investment, some nations in our region are still going backwards in their economic and social development indicators. Backwards from the sustainable development goals, backwards from the previous millennium development goals. We had to do something differently, and we've shaken it up, we've got this ideas hub, and if the secretaries of other departments

haven't visited it, I urge you to do so. Just challenges thinking, and the female leadership, Sarah Pearson, who is about to become the new director, has really made a difference.

Speaking of female leadership, I am a great believer of statistics and evidence to prove that we are achieving our aims or making a difference. The Turnbull government resolved that of the board appointments for which government is responsible, we should have a target of 50% female. I remember the debate very well, "Let's go for a target of 30%," and the women in the room, "Really?" 50%, and I'm pleased to say that at last count we were at 42% of all of the board and council positions that the Australian government is responsible for making, are now female. We also have a bit of a competition amongst the ministers. Okay, a big competition amongst the ministers, as to who can meet that target within their portfolio. And Frances Adamson, DFAT, at 50%. Thank you, yup.

It's a target because we don't want to impose a quota, so that any woman appointed to such a position believes that she is only there because we had to fill a quota. A target means that people think consciously about who they're appointing or the group of people they're interviewing for a particular position, and its addressing that unconscious bias. You can address conscious bias, because you can see it, you can hear it, you can feel it, you can smell it. But in terms of unconscious bias, it's very difficult to challenge, so if ministers are informed that they have a target to reach, and if they're not reaching it, they have to explain why, then it can have a pretty dramatic impact. It's a question of just looking further, asking more questions, asking others to come up with names. There are women who are more than capable of fulfilling these positions, please find them and put them forward.

I'm delighted to also know that of the eighteen government departments, we have eight female heads, eight female departmental Secretaries. A number of them are here today, I welcome them. I'm also very pleased with a focus that Frances has brought to the appointments to our heads of mission, and today I believe about 32%, 35%, you heard it here, 35% of heads of mission ... she's getting there, 50% ... of our heads of mission are women, and they are in some of the most challenging and difficult and demanding roles within our foreign service. Jan Adams, our Ambassador to Beijing; Harinder Sidhu, our High Commissioner in New Delhi; and Gillian Bird, our Ambassador to the United Nations; are just a few of the names that spring to mind.

Within the Cabinet, I am so pleased that my defence Cabinet colleague is Senator Marise Payne. She is the first female defence minister in Australia's history. There is a piece of architecture for foreign and defence ministers, it's called a two-plus-two, and with our important strategic partners around the world, we have annual two-plus-two meetings. That is, the foreign minister and defence minister of Australia meets with our counterpart Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence. When Marise and I turn up for Australia, invariably meet our male colleagues, it's just this little sense of pride as Marise Payne and I stand in front of the Australian flag and our male colleagues stand in front of their flag. But you know, we've set a pattern. India now has a female foreign minister and a female defence minister, and we're so looking forward to our first two-plus-two with India.

I'm also delighted to serve with Kelly O'Dwyer who amongst her portfolio of responsibilities as Minister for Revenue, is also the Minister for Women, and Kelly of course has the distinction of being the first female Cabinet minister to have a child while continuing to balance the challenging role of Cabinet Minister. And we're joined by Bridget McKenzie, the deputy leader of the National Party; and Michaelia Cash, a Senator from Western Australia who has a very demanding portfolio role about job creation and innovation. So ladies and gentlemen, women are making their mark in Australia. We are deliberately focused on ensuring that more women have the opportunity to drive change, to be a decision-maker, to be a leader. It's not something that always comes naturally, so it's something that we must continue to push and promote and advocate.

Some of the strongest advocates for female empowerment are the male champions, and men in this room, the Secretaries of our departments, those in the public sector who understand that in order for Australia to fulfil our potential, we must have women leaders at every level in the private and public sector. I know there's a way to go in the private sector. My last assessment was that about 11 of the top 200 ASX companies had female CEOs. There's still over 40 top companies that don't have any females on their board. I urge them to rethink that, because I believe that women in the private sector have an extraordinary contribution to make, and those companies will be more sustainable, more successful, more profitable, a better place to work, as a result of embracing more women at the top. Happy International Women's Day.

Question One: Hi, my name is Kaley from the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science. Thank you so much, that was a really good speech. I'm an economist and I completely understand the importance of having statistics to show that there is inequalities, but I'm also conscious that there is gendered experiences that we live every day that aren't necessarily captured by the statistics. I was just wondering if you have any ideas on how we can capture those and put a spotlight on it as well.

Julie Bishop: There are some obvious statistics that tell a much greater story. Things like pay gap, promotions, women in leadership roles, women in middle management, and all those statistics tell a story. On their own, they are a number, but we dig deeper to find why is that so, and it might be some systemic problems in the system. It might be barriers that we need to overcome. There might be legislative issues, although most legislative issues would have been addressed in Australia. There can be a whole range of reasons why women are not gaining parity or equality, and so it's a question of being aware and conscious of this.

The more we talk about it, the more we advocate, the more we promote, defend, the more likely there is to be change. That's why Frances introduced a ... which I'd love for you to talk about ... introduced a Women in Leadership programme within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which received a very high commendation, in fact the highest as a public service organisation embracing change. And so the leadership comes from the top, which is why events like this, people are reminded of the need to have in place formal and informal programmes to empower women at every level.

Frances Adamson: Which I have to credit Minister Peter Varghese, my predecessor, with starting or at least getting under way, the Women in Leadership strategy in DFAT, but he left me some very very challenging targets. I put out a message to staff yesterday to say that I was reasonably confident we would be able to reach by the end of 2018, our 40% target for SES Band 1 women. I know some departments have already gone beyond that but we would struggle to meet our 30 ... looking at my WIL colleague here ... 37% target for SES Band 2 women, but we need to be open about those. We need to measure and publish data. As you just said on the way in, Minister, or you said in your speech, a lot of these things are obvious. But some of the obvious things are actually less obvious, and I know you've been quite taken when you come to the department now and see the names on our meeting rooms.

Julie Bishop: I love this story. I love this story. Can I take it?

Frances Adamson: You can take it.

Julie Bishop: Frances came to me one day and said, "Look, I know this is only a little issue but it is symbolic." In the R.G. Casey Building we have dozens of rooms named after high-profile diplomats, distinguished diplomats. Every single one of them is male. We've also got a group of meeting rooms that clearly they couldn't think of enough males to name them after, so they named them after flowers.

Frances Adamson: That's true.

Julie Bishop: And Frances said, "Do you think we could name them after some of the distinguished female diplomats?" I said, "Absolutely." It is such an obvious thing, yet had been overlooked. So we now have ... is it five or six meeting rooms?

Frances Adamson: Eight, I think. Eight.

Julie Bishop: Eight meeting rooms named after our first female diplomat to the UN, or our first female diplomat to many different places.

Frances Adamson: Our first stenographer overseas in China overseas in the war period, a whole range of them.

Julie Bishop: It just sends a message, subtle, but it's symbolic that of course we value the contribution of the female diplomats as well, and they too can have a room named after them.

Frances Adamson: It's true. Now, IPAA colleagues over there, and then I think over there as well, so we'll take two questions if that's okay.

Julie Bishop: That's okay.

Frances Adamson: And then a third one there; so one, two, three if that's okay.

Joana Valente: Hello. Thank you so much. Hopefully I haven't interrupted anybody on that side. Joana Valente, Ernst & Young. I wanted your perspectives. Thank you for a fantastic morning. Your perspectives on confidence. We sometimes hear that women would do better if only they were more confident. I

disagree with that, and I'm wondering about your perspectives on how we define what it means to be confident, and the extent that in society we define confident behaviour as perhaps male-leaning traits, and whether that's in fact confidence or style. Thank you.

Frances Adamson: Okay, we've got confidence there, and then towards the back?

Question Two: Yeah, good morning. Isabelle Favre from the Australian National Audit Office. As a mother of two boys, two young men, I sometimes wish there was the same emphasis that we put on women's position, professionally and in the home, on promoting men in professions and positions in the home and elsewhere normally reserved for women. I was wondering if you had any thoughts on this. Thank you.

Frances Adamson: Thank you, and then the third question.

Question Three: Ole Nielsen, ACT Government. As a male champion, I have a similar question to the one before. What are your thoughts on how to approach our preschool children, boys and girls, to overcome these unconscious biases that are present?

Frances Adamson: Okay, unconscious bias and stereotyping. Whichever order you like.

Julie Bishop: I might start that way and come back to confidence. I actually find that young children and the coming generations have far less bias, conscious or unconscious, than current generations. They're used to women taking leadership roles, they're used to the mother or older sisters or whomever working, demanding equal treatment, being more involved in communities, being more involved in leadership decisions, being more involved generally. I think that the way children are being educated today, where girls and boys are treated equally, means that they won't see the world as perhaps older generations did. I see it in the young students who come in to work for me as graduates, or those who might intern. They have a very different view of the role of males and females than when I was going through law school and carving out a career in the law in South Australia. A very different attitude towards their rights, their entitlements, their position.

Unconscious bias, it's easy to say but it's very difficult to define, but boy, you know it when you experience it. So we just call it out. Just my example, of ensuring that when a minister turns up with an appointment to be considered by Cabinet, they've got to be prepared to explain why there were no women on the shortlist. There might be a very good reason why there weren't, but they've got to be prepared to say why, and I think that's important. On the stereotyping again, these are the sorts of issues that we grapple with all the time. There are very few roles that I can think of today that would be closed to males or females. We have female governors general, female prime ministers, female leaders in our defence force, we have female fighters, we have female pilots. Try and think of a field that's closed to women now. It doesn't mean that women are fulfilling the roles to the extent of equality, but it's a question of whether they are actually closed to women, and they're not.

That brings me to the confidence answer. I know it's hard to generalise, but women do have a different style. I've seen it over many many years. Back in

the 1980s, 90s, I was the managing and staff partner at a law firm, and interviewed hundreds and hundreds of people over my time, and employed hundreds and hundreds of people. Women are generally less likely to push themselves forward, less likely to ask for a promotion, less likely to set out their qualifications and their abilities, and more likely to just put their head down, work hard, and hope somebody notices. Sometimes people do and sometimes they don't, so a level of self-confidence, of backing your judgement, backing your instinct, is required. That's why I believe so much in mentoring. Share the experience that you've had, give somebody the tips on how you can actually fulfil your potential, how you can be in the line-up for a promotion, and it's often just a shared experience, to give somebody that confidence. I have been asked on a number of occasions what advice would I give a twelve-year-old Julie. You probably knew me then.

Frances Adamson: I did.

Julie Bishop: Frances and I knew each other in South Australia, but that is so Adelaide and so for another time. But I would have told her, "Back your judgement, back your instinct. Have more confidence in what you believe and what you think, and don't let others define who you are or what you can achieve." It's a message I give young women today. Just believe in yourself, and that's why mentors are so important, because there's somebody who is going to back you and back your judgement, and tell you that, "Yup, that's the way to go," and, "Yes you were right and hang in there." That kind of confidence might not come naturally, but it's instinctively there and needs to be brought out.

Frances Adamson: Can I just pick up another point. I had received an e-mail forwarded to me by a DFAT colleague actually last week, from a younger female colleague seeking advice from her, saying that she felt ... she has just been at a meeting, I think it was one actually in the Department. She put forward an idea in a roundtable discussion. The chair of the meeting happened not to notice this contribution. A little bit later on a male colleague had made exactly the same suggestion and was credited for it.

Julie Bishop: Welcome to my world.

Frances Adamson: Can I also just say, welcome to my world. That might surprise some colleagues. I read this e-mail and I just smiled, and I thought to myself, this young woman does not realise that this can happen. Of course it can happen to men too, I'm not saying it can't, but does not realise that this is a feature of our lives whether we are sitting around the Cabinet table, whether we are sitting ... dare I say it ... around the Secretaries Board table, the Secretaries Committee on National Security table. Virtually any table, not just in Canberra but around the world. Now, other than eye-rolling, which-

Julie Bishop: I have perfected.

Frances Adamson: What can we do about this? You can either be bolshie ... I can be a bit bolshie at times as colleagues know. You can roll your eyes, you can help each other.

Julie Bishop: Yeah, that's a very good point. If you are the only woman in the room, there's nothing you can do about it. If there is another woman in the room, it is incumbent upon that woman to say, "Oh, hang on, Frances just said that." "Yup, heard that." "Frances just said that." It is important, and I get into

trouble every time I say this, we do it in Cabinet. Because it happens and the women will back each other. Now, I think Madeline Albright's infamous phrase, whether she said it or not, I think she'd be proud to have it attributed to her, that there's a special place reserved in hell for women who don't help other women, applies to the boardroom table as well.

Frances Adamson: There we are. Okay, this is going to be life-changing for Canberra, I can see. Okay now, do we have any ... Maybe one more question.

Julie Bishop: One more.

Frances Adamson: -question, and then some quick photos perhaps.

Julie Bishop: Yeah.

Question Four: I'm Imogen from the Australian Financial Security Authority. We've touched a bit on that psychological bias, but when we look at any gender issue, whether it's women in leadership or domestic violence, there is deeply embedded cultures and psychological biases, and conditioning, that I have identified, I think, as one of the key contributors to those issues. So what are your ideas on attacking those two issues specifically?

Julie Bishop: We come up against this every day in our work, in our aid programme, because there are cultural sensitivities, there are paternalistic societies, there are challenges for us. So we are likewise sensitive to those issues and we work very closely in educating people about the benefits of embracing women in leadership roles or women in decision-making roles. Sometimes it's a very gentle approach as you progressively change attitudes. Changing a culture, changing deeply entrenched attitudes, is not easy. I don't have any blueprint. If I could do a White Paper on it, I would. But I don't have any specific answers other than you call out bias where you see it, you constantly seek to make people aware of what they're doing or saying, and you educate as to the benefits of what you are seeking to change. I think education and awareness are two very powerful tools. I'm not talking about being aggressive about it, I'm not talking about being over-assertive. I'm talking about encouraging people to see that the view they have is actually misguided, unfounded, is not going to lead to a better outcome, and slowly and surely you can change attitudes, which hopefully then change cultural perspectives.

Frances Adamson: Thanks very much Minister. Mindful of the time, I'd like to invite Trish Bergin, head of the Office for Women at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, to propose a vote of thanks to you.

Trish Bergin: Thanks very much. First I'd like to acknowledge Ms Frances Adamson, the IPAA ACT President and Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as we've all heard. Thank you to IPAA for hosting this absolutely marvellous event. If you could see it from up here, it's an extraordinary view, to see everyone come together. International Women's Day is an opportunity for us all to reflect on women who've come before us, our peers, our role models, our mentors. All those that have pressed for progress and have inspired us along the way. I think of women like my own mother who was a single parent and went back to night school and studied and went on to become a senior manager at ANU.

I think of leaders in organisations, all of whom are represented here and elsewhere, who challenge the way we do things around here. Who really step out of their way to support women, particularly women into leadership positions. I think of leaders, women and men, in departments that I've worked for, who are not afraid to visibly show how they are managing their life of caring for a family and having a career. Leaders who are authentically themselves, who bring their whole selves to work, and their experience, to lead and to support and to lift staff and colleagues. Leaders who pressed for progress through action and example. This morning has been so rich, thank you so much. Your points about the role that Australia plays in providing leadership to women's economic empowerment across the Indo-Pacific, I think is truly inspirational.

From that level down to the levels that you talked about in terms of mentorship and the importance of mentorship, of women stepping out of their way to assist other women, is so important. So I'd like to formally thank the Honourable Ms Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, for her address today. I'd like to thank her for her time, her inspiring words, the example she's given us, not just as a woman leader, a representative and a cabinet minister, but for her own individual press for change. Ladies and gentlemen, I now ask you to put your hands together to thank the Minister for her time and her words today.