



Nomination for Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

It is a great honour to be nominated as a candidate for the position of Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. I thank the Government of Australia for showing such faith in me.

The OECD is one of the most consequential international bodies in the world today.

It makes a difference to billions of people every day.

It helps to improve living standards, build social cohesion and strengthen environmental performance not just in its own member economies, but in the global economy more broadly.

It does so by sharing information, developing policy best practice and agreeing standards and norms which promote growth and productivity.

Through its work, the OECD has substantially contributed to an increase in world GDP, which has increased by more than 600 per cent since the OECD's creation in 1961.

The key to the OECD's success is the willingness of its member economies to share their successes (and failures) and to co-operate with others to find solutions to an ever-changing range of policy challenges.

Although our economies compete fiercely in global markets every day, we recognise that the sum of our collaborative efforts is greater than its parts.

We all benefit when we all grow and prosper.

Today, however, we all confront the devastating social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

OECD members and observers look to the Organisation, now more than ever, for evidence-based analysis and policy innovation, as well as a place to inspire and facilitate learning, exchange and collaboration. At the same time, the Organisation must continue to play its essential role of measuring the economic, environmental and social performance of its members' policies and programs. Now is a time for OECD members to recommit to cooperation and leadership.

Ángel Gurría has served the OECD's members with distinction and great impact for almost one quarter of its lifespan. He has increased the influence of the Organisation, expanded its membership to include thriving economies of Central Europe and South America, while also strengthening its engagement with other multilateral and regional organisations.

Under Secretary General Gurría's leadership, the OECD has worked in partnership with member economies to manage their transition through the global financial crisis and the European sovereign debt crisis.

The next Secretary General will also need to be able to build consensus and extract the benefits of a diversity of views across the broad range of policy challenges confronting us today. This will require both energy and empathy to build consensus and a collective commitment to action.

I offer a rare perspective for this role.

I have shared my life in equal measure between Europe and the Asia-Pacific.

I lived the first half of my life in Europe, growing up in the German-speaking part of Belgium, graduating with a law degree after studies in French, Flemish and English.

Like one-third of my fellow Australians who have settled in Australia from around the world, I have built a home and a career in our diverse and overwhelmingly successful multicultural society.

Since I moved to Australia 24 years ago, I have worked in the private sector in Australia, in Parliament and in senior roles in government, including as the Australian Minister for Finance throughout the term of the current Australian Government.

As Australia's longest serving Finance Minister, I have worked with others to strengthen our nation's economic resilience. Australia has just completed 28 years of uninterrupted economic growth, entering the pandemic with globally respected strength in our economy, government finances and social institutions.



In response to COVID-19, we have implemented a comprehensive suite of social and economic initiatives to protect the vulnerable, sustain employment, secure business survival and bolster supply chains.

Australia's ability to support and protect its citizens at a time of global disruption and distress is due in no small part to the economic and fiscal reforms which preceded this time.

As Finance Minister over the last seven years I have worked with my colleagues to capitalise on the economic opportunities of our vibrant Asia-Pacific region, while continuing to build our trade and investment relationships with Europe and the Americas.

Like many democratic political systems, Australia's parliamentary democracy requires negotiation and engagement across policy and ideological differences. Bringing together diverse democracies of the OECD similarly requires constructive engagement based on evidence, trust and mutual respect.

As Leader of the Government in the Australian Senate, I have been able to secure the necessary support for policy reforms in the areas of taxation, employment, education, trade, immigration and budget repair.

The members of the OECD share the core values of democracy, rule of law and open markets: hallmarks of the Australian compact. These elements bind the OECD membership together in its diversity, with our different geographies, cultural and political backgrounds.

The Asia-Pacific region, within which the Australian economy has thrived, is perhaps the most dynamic region in the world. Twenty-two of Australia's twenty-four closest neighbours are developing countries, with vast populations, geostrategic challenges and considerable disparities in wealth.

Successive Australian governments have built deep and enduring partnerships with our diverse neighbours, to our collective benefit.

As a member of Australia's National Security Committee, I understand the impacts of changing power balances and the important role of global institutions to maintain stability and promote prosperity.

In my current role I have witnessed first-hand the value of global co-operation at every G20 Leaders Meeting since 2014 and at many other international fora.

Australia is an outward looking, open trading economy. Our collective prosperity, together with that of our global partners, is due in no small part to the essential interconnectedness and mutual benefit achieved through an adherence to effective international rules and standards.

The relevance of the OECD in developing and upholding these norms and standards has never been greater.

If entrusted with the responsibility of serving as Secretary General, I will ensure the OECD continues to be a fundamental pillar of the world's economic governance and a body of relevance and impact, including within the G7, G20, APEC and the WTO.

I will further elevate the OECD's expertise to ensure it delivers, helping to meet the enormous challenges of our times by harnessing the skills of all its members to formulate and promote the policies needed for a better future.

Good governance is essential to the success of this Organisation. Under my leadership, I will invite members to judge my performance based on my capacity to deliver a transparent and efficient Organisation focussed on member priorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic is testing our communities and our economies.

We will rebuild our economies, indeed all economies, more quickly if our international cooperation is strong, especially in the OECD.

My national and international experience and my depth of understanding of the challenges facing our global community, positions me well to lead the OECD through this historic and difficult period.

Kind regards



MATHIAS CORMANN

