



Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to thank each and every one of you for joining us tonight for the Italian National Day celebrations. It has been a couple of years since the invitations were extended to the whole Italian community and friends of Italy. It is with great happiness that I see many of you and I wish to welcome those who, for the first time, participate at our events.

**Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE**



As you have certainly guessed, the relations between Italy and Australia and, in particular, South Australia, have undergone a major acceleration in recent years. Italy is in fact increasingly aware of the enormous importance of Australia and Australia of the importance of Italy and its community. The first generation of Italians in Australia has contributed substantially to the economic development of this State and the new generation of Italians, largely highly specialized, are each in their respective sectors contributing to the intensification of scientific and-technological, as well as commercial relations between our countries.

**Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE**



In March 2018 new Italian Ambassador, S.E Stefano Gatti has begun his Australian posting. Together with him, the whole consular network is working on a single strategy aimed at strengthening the already excellent relations between Italy and Australia. One of the main objectives will certainly be to "capitalize" on the full potential of the 200 existing agreements between Italian and Australian Universities and Research Centers, both public and private. Also and above all because it means investing in the future of our bright young people.

Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE



There are many initiatives already in progress, including, for example, the "Square Kilometer Array" project, which sees our scientists side by side, together with other international teams, for the realization of the largest network of radio-telescopes for the observation of the Universe. South Australia is a key State in this perspective. The presence among our distinguished guests of the Scientific Attaché of the Embassy in Canberra, Dr Anna Maria Fioretti, in addition to the recent appointment as Official Knight of the Republic of Italy, OMRI of Eng. Nicola Sasanelli is a clear proof of how much importance it's given to the sector and this geographical area.

Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE



But also the-commercial sector deserves a mention. In November last year, the then Foreign Minister, Angelino Alfano, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Foreign Minister Bishop to intensify our bilateral partnership, especially in trade and investment. Furthermore, Italy has always taken a position of full support for the negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Australia. Italy aspires to be the hub of Australia towards the largest common market in the world: the European Union. We want Italian ports to be the access ports of Australia in Europe. At the same time, Australia can be an important conduit for Italian companies, also towards the vast Asian market.

Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE



With our Fincantieri - one of the largest shipbuilding companies in the world, with more than 230 years of history and 20 shipyards operating in different parts of the world - Italy is competing with the great "SEA 5000" a program for construction, here in South Australia, of the new anti-submarine frigates requested by the Australian Navy. If we succeed: South Australia will be the great protagonist of a project that will transfer high technology, innovation and European industrial capabilities along the broad defense supply chain. And of course thousands of new jobs will be created here.

**Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE**



But there is not only Fincantieri. Last April, ENEL announced an investment of 157 million US dollars for the construction of the largest solar project in Australia, whose work has already started in Port Augusta. I am very happy that we are working to re-establish the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce.

It is a project that I really care about because South Australia has got all it takes to become the symbol of the revival of economic relations between Italy and Australia.

**Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE**



The last point that I want to emphasize is the importance of the Italian language. The teaching of the Italian language in Australia was confirmed in 2017 at a very high level, making the country one of the first, if not the first, to teach Italian language outside of Europe. In South Australia there are 13837 primary and secondary students and 18719 students in Catholic schools. To these are added the students of Flinders University with 242 students and the University of South Australia with 235 students for a total of 33 033 students. To these must be added private language courses and one can reasonably estimate a number of 35 000 students of Italian.

Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE



Teaching the Italian language is a fundamental tool for commercial penetration and investment in Australia in a framework that will see 2018 as a key year for the development of the strategic partnership between Italy and Australia. In the framework of the MOU between Italy and South Australia, renewed in 2015, on the initiative of the Italian Consulate an Italian Advisory Group was established with the task of developing policies within the local Ministry of Education aimed at improving the teaching of Italian language in public schools.

Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE



In addition to the continuous support given through our language assistants, the action taken in favor of the CLIL immersion programs continues with the prospect of reaching, in the not too distant future, the opening of a real bilingual school.

Thank you all for your attention. Viva l'Italia!

**Consolato d'Italia
ADELAIDE**