Speech - Polio Eradication Press Conference

Julia Gillard: Good morning everyone. It’s a great pleasure to stand here tod support of global efforts to eradicate polio. I’m especially pleased to be standing here with Prime Minister Cameron, President Jonathan, Prime Minister Harper, Prime Minister Gillani, who have all shown tremendous leadership and personal commitment in this cause of eradicating polio.

Commonwealth countries have a strong history of working together on many important global challenges, and so it’s very fitting that we’re here this morning in the spirit of partnership and commitment. Partnership not only with each other with our civil societies, including the inter- and non-governmental organisation in overcoming polio.

There are many representatives of those organisations here today, and I warmly extraordinary work. Thank you for being with us. One of these organisations is the Initiative. Since the Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched in 1988, 90% eradicated worldwide. That is great progress, but while polio remains anywhere, and so we’re here today to demonstrate our commitment to ending polio for all time.

I’m very pleased to announce this morning that the Australian government will $50 million to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative to help end polio. We’ve make real results. It will help purchase vaccines, it will help carry out monitoring outbreaks. It will be an investment in saving lives, and although polio affects a than it used to, we need to keep this action going.

We know that this will yield real results. At the end of the day, vaccinating again simple action of putting some vaccine, a few drops of vaccine, in the mouth of and end polio forever.

I’m very pleased to be here with my fellow leaders, and I will call now on Presi remarks. Thank you.

Goodluck Jonathan: Thank you, your Excellency, our host, the honourable Prime Ministers here with me. Ladies and gentlemen, I’m particularly pleased to Commonwealth leaders to talk about polio, how we will get it eradicated in the morning, to plan the complete eradication of polio, is a major achievement for

I’m particularly happy because Nigeria is a country that will still have vestiges of polio, to plan the complete eradication of polio, is a major achievement for

I promised, when I met with Bill Gates earlier this year, that Nigeria will make two years. We had very bad cases of polio, but government has worked so hard, polio is now limited to seven states. As of 2010, we’ve reduced it by 11 cases that were recorded, but somehow, last year, we recorded about 38 cases.

I insisted that I must set up a special task force, and am going to integrate it into State for Health. They will work with the governors and traditional religious leaders the next two years, surely, we will eradicate polio.

We are stepping up our funding in polio from $17 million to $30 million in the r million every year in the next two years, to make sure that, with global assistance We have no choice, because polio is quite debilitating. It separates the victims the families very miserable. As a leader, you don’t want to see that among you well that it’s a disease that you can completely eradicate and prevent.

So today I am happy. Let me thank the Prime Ministers that are here with me all of you that are here. Journalists, members of the civil societies and other or in eradication of polio. I will work with you to make sure that we end this debilitating developing countries. I thank you.
Julia Gillard: Thank you, your Excellency. Could I now invite Prime Minister C

David Cameron: Thank you very much, Prime Minister, and I’m delighted to commitment that President Jonathan has just made. Today, for the vast major eliminated, and the harrowing image of children in iron lungs banished to the people who would otherwise be paralysed and are now walking because of poli

Annual infection rates have fallen over the second half of the century from 350 of the great goal of eradicating polio. There are now just four countries where stopped. That’s India, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, but in India, they ha

For all this progress, we haven’t quite finished the job, and the truth is that ne enough. Why? Well, what can be more of a moral imperative than stopping chi have in our power to prevent? When we have the vaccines and the tools to say to put this off until tomorrow, because while we are waiting, children are dying

If that isn’t enough of a reason, just consider this. Polio is a highly contagious can infect hundreds before it’s even been identified. So if we fail to get rid of the disease will spread back to countries where it’s been eliminated. That is no example, Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Chad were once all fr re-emerge.

Put simply, as long as one child remains at risk, all children remain at risk, and January, the UK pledged a further £40 million of matched funding, doubling ou next, and bring out total contribution since the inception of Global Polio Eradic challenged others to match our extra funding with £5 for every extra pound, ai than exceeded in the first year.

Britain is also the first ever G20 country to set out a clear plan to hit the UN 0. know in the long term we have to help countries not just by giving them mone out of poverty through aid alone. But fewer ideas are more powerful than the ε people now live free from the fear of smallpox, so a polio-free world is within o political will to see it through.

In this week that marked World Polio Day, let us resolve to finish the job, and all. Thank you.

Julia Gillard: Thank you very much. I would now like to invite Prime Minister €

Yousaf Raza Gillani: Madam Prime Minister, Excellencies, Pakistan fully sup Initiative. We appreciate the commitment of Australia for this timely initiative. 2010 to 2012, will help in protecting every child from polio. We are seriously eradicate from Pakistan, has resurfaced in the country during the past six to unaccept able for the government.

There are certain reasons, that there are a lot of cross border movement, from the middle of a war, and because of this situation, even the doctors can’t reach terrain is so difficult.

We have launched a national emergency action plan for polio eradication in the is to interrupt transmission of polio while it is in Pakistan by the end of 2011. E campaign is launched to administer polio drops to 33 million children across th

The importance that Pakistan attaches to this task is reflected by the fact that Asifa Bhutto Zardari, is designated as a goodwill ambassador for eradication of receive polio drops from her late mother, Prime Minister Bhutto. We are accord polio in our country. I have set up a polio monitoring cell in the Prime Minister functioning at the provincial and district levels.

We hope to see positive outcomes of our efforts and commitment by Decembe coordinating the anti-polio campaign with UNICEF and WHO, who regularly mo huge task ahead of us, but we remain determined to eradicate this virus and p the scourge of polio.
There's another one reason, which I want to explain at this forum. There are p
because of terrorism, we are fighting a war. At the same time, the people who Ortho
d and so fanatic, they don't let even the doctors to within those areas. taking the religious scholars on board to help us. Thank you very much.

Julia Gillard: Thank you very much. If I could now invite Prime Minister Harp

Stephen Harper: Merci beaucoup, thank you, Prime Minister Gillard, and that announcement here today. Fellow heads of government, ladies and gentlemen, Initiative is a remarkable coalition of volunteer effort, philanthropy, and enlight the scope of its vision and the size of its accomplishment, it must surely be rec examples of international cooperation since the Second World War.

The government of Canada is proud to have supported it for many years. When campaign that would lead to the 1988 WHO resolution to eradicate polio, polio disease all over the world, crippling those it touched for life. Then, as David Ca 350,000 people in 125 countries, mostly children, were infected.

People who cared had the courage to dream big dreams. Nothing less, in fact, which children would grow up able to walk, where none would know the pain o so often went with paralysis. So they got to work, and something remarkable t actually this problem that looked so large and so intractable could be solved. It vaccination, one small dose at just 13 cents a dose, at a time.

Ladies and gentlemen, when doing good is that easy and that inexpensive, doi Today the number of countries where polio remains a serious threat is, as has One, I should add, is Afghanistan, where Canada has made polio eradication a there. I'm happy to report that while polio is still categorised as endemic in Af is actually polio-free. Now is the time for the final push.

I congratulate the organisers of the global initiative, the many donors whose d and the hundreds of volunteers who have brought polio so much closer to final today to confirm that the government of Canada will make a further investment additional grant to support and strengthen global polio surveillance and immu

Once again, I want to thank you, Prime Minister Gillard, for the opportunity to for polio eradication. Thank you.

Julia Gillard: Thank you. Thank you very much. I'd like to thank my fellow le and acknowledge some other very special people in the audience. I'm delight Head of the initiative, has joined us here today from Geneva to receive this cor thing of the past, and Chris is working hard on that.

I'd also like to acknowledge [Ramos Feras] who is with us today. He is a polio and he is working to build community awareness and support for polio eradication particularly acknowledge his efforts today. Thank you very much.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of Rotary in what has been a long-stand I'd like to remind everyone in this room that change is possible. When the Que in the grips of a polio epidemic. Of course, circumstances have changed in our

Amongst the people who were the victims of that polio epidemic were former L Ambassador to the United States, and I learned for the first time this morning my department, also suffered polio as a child.

I say these words because it reminds us that this is an issue which within our l the world, including in our own country of Australia. Now we are within graspin worldwide, and that is what we are determined to do. Remarkable change acro privlege it would be, to be the generation that could say we had ended polio f

I'd now like to direct your attention to the video screens and we will hear a me his foundation, has done so much work on vaccinating children, including again
Bill Gates: Good morning. I'm sorry I can't be there in person with you in Australia and thank Australia for its critical role in putting this issue on the agenda.

This is a great opportunity to build on the progress that has been made in the past decade. It's particularly exciting to look at the opportunity we have to save millions of lives through immunisation. At the very top of our priority list is the campaign to eradicate polio.

But we're at a crossroads, and we need more urgency to finish that last piece. China prove again that if we have polio anywhere, there's a risk of polio spreading. So despite the challenging economic environment, it's important that we double down and finish this fight. For the countries where polio is a threat, we need a pledge for the Commonwealth countries will encourage others to step forward with all the commitments we need to finish polio eradication. Our Foundation is proud to join China in providing an additional US$40 million to the funds announced today.

We're excited to be working in partnership with you, and we really appreciate the other health issues that will improve the productivity of people worldwide.

Julia Gillard: Thank you very much. We've got time for a couple of quick questions to have to go to the leaders' retreat. Yes, you.

Tessa Mays: Tessa Mays, I'm a reporter from London. Given there are so many more democracy. Isn't it time that the Head of the Commonwealth position was on hereditary rule?

Julia Gillard: Well, I'm not sure who that's a question to. It might be you.

David Cameron: Well, I think...?

Julia Gillard: I'm not sure about the relationship with polio.

David Cameron: I'm not sure of the links between polio and - I think one of the Commonwealth, this extraordinary organisation, a voluntary organisation, that One of the things I think that unites us, and we saw it very clearly at the dinner respect for Her Majesty the Queen, and the leadership that she has given to that she has for the Commonwealth.

I think, actually, that it's something that brings us together and unites us, and to be her 60th year on the throne, we should be thanking her for the leadership Common on these issues, rather than thinking of changing things.

Julia Gillard: Thank you. We'll take one question here and one there, and the

David Aikenson: David Aikenson, media in Canada. Prime Minister Gillard, I forgive me for being cynical, but I wondered if the seat on the UN Security Council playing a little hardball this afternoon in the work you have ahead of you with world countries, and pushing harder to adopt all the recommendations in the United Nations. Secondly, I understand some leaders are departing early, Prime Minister Cameron, may not be here for the finish tomorrow. I wonder what you make of that.

Julia Gillard: The Commonwealth is an organisation that works by consensus; strength, so as I chair the leaders' retreat over the next two days, we will be s' been working on reform proposals and already yesterday, during the course of of reform proposals about strengthening the work of the Commonwealth Minister.

So my priority as chair is coordinating the discussions we will have today as we Persons Group and work through to the consensus we can achieve on reform. I would remind people that progress has already been made during the

On the attendance of leaders, I understand, let me assure you, I understand that particularly understand it during this period, where there are a number of inter significance. Prime Minister Cameron, for example, I think he is amazing Austri...
simultaneously be on their TV screens in Europe and here as our TVs continue meeting and now he's here in Australia.

Look, there are a lot of pressures on people's time, given issues in the global e G20 very quickly after this meeting, so I understand that leaders come and pai given the other pressures on them. Yes, you, sir.

Sali Lafur: I'm [Sali Lafur] from Pakistan. Ma'am, one can't help but to appr talking about just now. As Prime Minister Gillani has pointed out, that cross-bo and the presence of militants who are opposing, rather resisting this immunisa efforts in some parts of northern area in Pakistan.

I wish to know, from you and Prime Minister of Britain and Prime Minister of C the region, that have you chucked out any strategy to stop these two points? F from Afghanistan, which is also causing instability in Pakistan, and second, to s elements from coming in the way of immunisation and vaccination campaign. I

Julia Gillard: Well, I'll answer first and then turn to Prime Ministers Cameron a in Afghanistan today, as we stand here talking about polio. We have Australian them in considerable numbers. For a nation our size, we have sustained a very Afghanistan, and we are there because we want to ensure that Afghanistan do a safe haven for the training of terrorists.

We're there particularly training members of the Afghan national army and Afg the security for their nation, but we work in the province where we are predor Province, we work in a combined team which not only combines the efforts of development workers there too, because we understand that it's about securi Afghanistan, including the provision of vital healthcare services like immunisati provision of education and capacity-building, particularly education for girls.

We have enabled girls to attend school in a way which has not been possible in Minister of Australia, to my nation that our deployment in Afghanistan will tran would be aware that President Karzai has spoken about 2014 as the transition the people of Australia we will stay engaged in Afghanistan in some form to th

That means, of course, that we will have an ongoing partnership with the peop and development questions. I think that by building capacity in Afghanistan we isues that you raised. I'll turn to Prime Minister Cameron for some comments.

David Cameron: Obviously in Afghanistan we are supporting not just the Briti supporting the governance in Afghanistan, and that includes the infrastructure Pakistan, we're also now - that's our largest single aid program.

In terms of the specific points you make about cross-border problems and the border - we want the closest possible cooperation with Pakistan, and the cl Pakistan and Afghanistan, so we squeeze the problem of militancy and support Durand Line.

That is exactly what is required, and Prime Minister Gillani and I have spoken i possible coordination, the closest possible effort, so we deal with these proble

Yousaf Raza Gillani: May I explain this position? In fact, there is two questi border movement. For the cross-border movement, there is another problem v When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, there were 3.5 million refugees. 1 moment, for the last 30 years, and the world, they have forgotten about those If the world helps us, those refugees, 3.5 million who had married in Pakistan, who have studied in Pakistan, they should go back to Afghanistan and the relie That would help at least 70 per cent of cross-border movement.

The second is the biometric system through which they cannot go to each othe impression, and that has not been encouraged by the other side. I think that t that there is extremely difficult -- there are about more than 2000 kilometres t
can't defend it. As far as the militants are concerned, who are objecting, that's
to negotiate with them, to negotiate at least with the local tribes to keep them
Therefore, we are very successfully - we have been able to isolate the militant:
tribes are helping us for this polio campaign. Thank you.
\textbf{Julia Gillard:} Thank you. Prime Minister Harper.

\textbf{Stephen Harper:} Since our government took office, we have been dedicate-
d our engagement in Afghanistan, an integrated approach between defence, dev-
- as I mentioned, one of the top priorities of that engagement has been polio e
obviously, the difficulty of the security situation.

The fact of the matter is, as Prime Minister Cameron mentioned earlier, if we d
occurrence, not just in Afghanistan, but all through the region and ultimately a
we're trying to prevent.

In terms of your question about cross-border movements and cross-border ter
expect all governments to work together to eradicate not just polio but to erad
sides of the border.

\textbf{Julia Gillard:} Thank you very much. Now, we must leave or we are going to be
everybody who's attended today, particularly those who have worked for a lon
Thank you for everything you do.

Sat, 2011-10-29 18:52

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