



Australian High Commission
Malaysia

MEDIA RELEASE

**A FIRST NATIONS-THEMED MURAL TO CELEBRATE
70 YEARS OF AUSTRALIA'S DIPLOMATIC PRESENCE**

KUALA LUMPUR, 17 NOVEMBER 2025 – Her Excellency Ms Danielle Heinecke, Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia, today unveiled a First Nations-themed mural to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Australia's diplomatic presence in Malaysia. The mural will be affixed to the High Commission front fence on Jalan Yap Kwan Seng for passers-by to engage with.

The High Commissioner was joined for the launch by Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria; YB Dato' Sri Tiong King Sing, Malaysian Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture; and senior representatives from Kuala Lumpur City Hall.

The mural was developed by Australian First Nations designer Professor Wayne Quilliam and Malaysian Orang Asli artist Mr Shaq Koyok. Prof. Quilliam consecrated the mural with a smoking ceremony. Smoking ceremonies involve smouldering native Australian ingredients and have been performed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for thousands of years to promote wellbeing and foster connections to culture and country. Orang Asli members of the Temuan community from western Malaysia also attended.

The artwork draws on Prof. Quilliam's Palawa heritage, taking inspiration from the story of Bunjil, the great wedge-tailed eagle that created the earth and the sky. The panels also include elements of traditional Temuan weaving from Mr Koyok's community. Together, the concepts symbolise the deep connections between Australia and Malaysia and our First Nations communities.

In line with the design's focus on the environment and nature, the mural was painted using ochre, naturally occurring pigments from Australia's outback. The panels are Malaysian-made ECOPEAL boards, fabricated from recycled beverage containers.



Australia has been connected to this region since ancient times. A thousand years ago, traders from maritime Southeast Asia travelled to Australia's northern coastline to trade sea cucumbers with First Nations communities. As far back as the mid-1800s, migrants from the Malay peninsula travelled to Australia as pearl divers, miners and workers in sugar plantations.

The High Commissioner said, "this mural illustrates the strong friendship between our peoples and First Nations Communities.

"Australia's relationship with Malaysia is built on mutual respect, common interests, shared history and enduring people-to-people connections – and we're proud to be celebrating 70 years of these connections in 2025.

"We hope viewers of this artwork can pause for a moment to experience an artistic representation of the many stories that weave our two countries together.

"This mural is not a snapshot in time, but rather reflects on our historic ties and looks to the future of our relationship."

The mural will permanently be on public display for all passers-by to appreciate and engage with. We encourage social media users to tag High Commission accounts in posts using images of the mural (X: [AusHCMalaysia](#); Facebook: [Australian High Commission in Malaysia](#); Instagram: [AusHCMalaysia](#)).

Imagery will be available via: [Special Mural Launch Event – For Media](#)