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His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

8 April 2020

Mr Charles Michel
President of the European Council
BRUSSELS

Mrs Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
BRUSSELS

Dear President Michel and President von der Leyen

On the occasion of Europe Day, I wish to convey to you, the institutions and the people of the European Union and its member states my warmest wishes, together with those of the Australian Government and people.

I have been saddened by reports of the impacts of the COVID-19 virus in Europe and express my sincere condolences for the lives lost. The solidarity of the international community is more important than ever as the world's nations work together to manage the challenges posed by the virus. The European Union and Australia have a strong and long-lasting partnership that will endure, built on political commitment, a warm personal affinity, shared values and mutual understanding.

In these challenging times, Australia attaches a priority to working with the EU to support a robust global economic recovery after the pandemic. Australia and the EU enjoy productive working relations in numerous international organisations, most notably the G20 and the WTO, and this provides a solid platform for future cooperation. Restoring trade and investment will be important to reviving global growth. Our ongoing negotiations for a comprehensive and ambitious free trade agreement (FTA) take on added importance as a way to demonstrate our shared support for open trade and connected supply chains. Australia also remains committed to partnering with the EU to ensure the rules-based international trading system is effective.

May I express my confidence that the friendly relations between Australia and the European Union will continue to prosper in the coming year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'David Hurley', written over a large, stylized 'X' mark.

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