Mr Mikhail Gorbachev; The Honourable Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Your Excellencies; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen. On behalf of The Australian National University, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to this Centre for Democratic Institutions Address.

The Centre for Democratic Institutions at The Australian National University is an initiative of the Australian Government. It is one in which the Minister has played a vital personal role, and the University is pleased to give its full support to this important initiative.

ANU has a long tradition of involvement in Asia and the Pacific, and has played a unique role in the economics, politics and sociology of the region. The address today is to be delivered by a statesman who has profoundly affected the shape of global politics in our century and into the next and its delivery in this venue is symbolic of what the Centre for Democratic Institutions offers. It brings a great statesman into linkages with The Australian National University and the institutions of government here in Canberra and adds another dimension to our already strong relationship with the countries of our region.

CDI is contributing positively to the debate on democracy and governance by bringing speakers of such stature to us. Last year, the Former President of the Philippines, Fidel Ramos, spoke about the democratic evolution in his country.

CDI has also been active in a programme of training at a crucial time for our neighbour, Indonesia.

Mr Gorbachev comes to us as a key participant in the transition to democracy in Russia and as a distinguished commentator on the process. The ANU is proud of its part in the contribution to research and training in the economics and politics of our region and its interactions with other regions. We are proud of the contribution made by the University's Centre for Democratic Institutions in this respect. I am pleased that we enjoy such substantial support from the Federal Government in these endeavours. Their success is measured by the distinction of those who participate in
CDI's programme. We can have no better measure of that distinction than in today's speaker, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev.

Welcome to ANU and to the CDI Address.