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## Albanese and Luxon Highlight Alliance in Queenstown Summit

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Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon met in Queenstown on August 9 and 10, 2025, for the annual Australia-New Zealand Leaders' Meeting. The talks reaffirmed the close bilateral relationship between the two countries amid ongoing global challenges.

The meeting was held at the Taramea retreat, owned by tech entrepreneur Rod Drury. Discussions covered a wide range of issues including trade, defense cooperation, and regional security. Both leaders highlighted the importance of the Australia-New Zealand

Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA), which facilitates approximately \$32 billion in annual two-way trade. Prime Minister Luxon described Australia as New Zealand's key formal ally, emphasizing shared interests in security. Albanese noted the alignment of both countries on efforts to maintain stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

The leaders also addressed recent global economic developments, including tariffs imposed by the United States on Australian and New Zealand exports. These include a 10 percent tariff on Australian goods and a 15 percent tariff on New Zealand products. Both governments expressed support for reforming the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to better respond to trade disruptions.

Additionally, the two countries jointly condemned Israel's planned military operations in Gaza City, urging compliance with international humanitarian law. The Australian Labor government's cautious stance on sanctions related to this issue has drawn criticism from opposition figures, including calls for stronger actions.

The summit included a wreath-laying ceremony at the war memorial in Arrowtown to honor the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), reflecting the shared military history of the two nations. Prime Minister Luxon outlined goals for "frictionless" trans-Tasman trade and travel, including plans for harmonized standards and digital identity systems.

Some issues remain unresolved. Australia's 501 deportation policy, which allows the deportation of non-citizens convicted of serious crimes, continues to be a source of tension between the two countries.