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Australia-NZ Leaders Strengthen Alliance in 2025 Summit

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At the 2025 Australia-New Zealand Leaders' Meeting in Queenstown, Prime Ministers Anthony Albanese and Christopher Luxon reaffirmed their nations' close alliance, committing to deeper economic and security cooperation.

On August 9, 2025, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese met New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in Queenstown for the annual Australia-New Zealand Leaders' Meeting, held at Te Wharehuanui. The leaders emphasized the enduring bond between their nations, rooted in shared values and trust, which supports robust economic, cultural, and community ties. The meeting focused on advancing the Trans-Tasman Roadmap to 2035, a framework to enhance the Single Economic Market (SEM), which promotes seamless trade and investment between Australia and New Zealand. Two-way trade,

valued at \$32 billion annually, underscores the importance of this partnership, according to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Luxon described Australia as New Zealand's "only ally," highlighting plans to integrate their militaries into a cohesive Anzac force, referencing the historic Australian New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC). "A big focus has been interoperability with Australia to operate as an essential Anzac force in our region," Luxon told reporters, as reported by Mingooland. The leaders endorsed the Joint Statement on Closer Defence Relations (CDR), signed in December 2024, to enhance deterrence and Pacific-led security responses. They also addressed regional tensions, noting a Chinese naval exercise in the Tasman Sea in February 2025, which disrupted commercial flights.

Economic priorities included harmonizing regulations and boosting digital collaboration. The leaders launched mutual recognition of digital identity services and commended progress on aligning standards, as outlined by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Albanese met with business leaders from the Australia New Zealand Leadership Forum (ANZLF), reinforcing commitments to reduce trade barriers and support net-zero transitions. "Australia and New Zealand share challenges to grow and innovate," Albanese said, per The Nightly.

Security discussions addressed threats like foreign interference and cyber-attacks, with both nations affirming that a cyber-attack could trigger the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS). The leaders also committed to supporting the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), emphasizing Pacific-led solutions to climate change and regional stability. The summit concluded with a wreath-laying at Arrowtown War Memorial Park, symbolizing their shared history.