

A conversation with the community

The workings of forums like the G20 can seem very remote for most Australians. In an article published in *The Age* late last year ahead of Prime Minister Julia Gillard's attendance at the G20, BCA Global Engagement Task Force Chairman John Denton explained the importance of community engagement. The G20 can contribute to improving the economies of most nations around the world, he said, but governments and business leaders need to redouble their efforts to take the wider community with them in advocating important reforms.



**JOHN W.H. DENTON
CHAIRMAN**

**GLOBAL
ENGAGEMENT
TASK FORCE**



ON TASK FORCE ACHIEVEMENTS

Foreign investment is a challenging policy area in Australia and the BCA has brought to the fore some of the issues that need to be considered if Australia is to take advantage of available opportunities, particularly in our region.

Our engagement with Asia has to be effective and that means it needs to be front and centre in the minds of policymakers. As an important aspect of this, the BCA has highlighted the need for Australia to be very strategic in thinking through our relationship with China.

As a direct result of the work of the task force, the voice and perspective of business is now embedded as part of the G20 agenda.

ON BCA LEADERSHIP

BCA members understand that globalisation is not a choice for Australia. It is a tool for our success and we can't

blithely engage in it from time to time. Protecting our national interest requires us to devote considerable intellectual, diplomatic, political and business effort.

We also understand that success cannot be taken for granted. The importance and nature of global engagement needs constant explanation and advocacy here and abroad. We need to explain that it is not something to be afraid of but is actually something that reflects all the linkages we have made through our history. These are strengths we should trust and build on.

Business cannot afford to be satisfied or distracted by modest, insubstantial support for our positions. We have to keep driving the agenda to achieve concrete, long-term results.

The language of business is universally understood. It's all about returns, shareholder value, creating opportunities, translating them into jobs and improving the overall wellbeing of communities.

Any discussion on global engagement would be worse for the absence of the BCA voice. The organisation achieves success through and with its members. That's been the track record and it's the greatest strength of the organisation.

ON VISION AND VALUES

The BCA has a strong values base. We are focused on Australia having a successful economy, not just in 2011 but in 2050, and, working backwards from there, identifying and explaining the steps we need to take.

Our challenge is to translate the values of the organisation into action through a combination of thoughtfulness around policy and relentless advocacy. You don't take future prosperity for granted; you have to have clear milestones to deliver it.