



MAYORAL MEMO - 27 MARCH 2024

I write this column while sitting in South Korea as part of a self-funded Dubbo delegation visiting this country and then Japan. In the ever-connected tapestry of our global community, the threads of international relationships weave a rich pattern of cultural understanding, economic collaboration, and mutual respect. In particular, sister city relationships ignore geographical boundaries and political differences, fostering a spirit of global kinship and shared growth.

27 March is the twentieth anniversary of my election to Council and in that time, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of these international bonds, particularly through our connections with sister cities in Japan and China.

Australia, with its diverse and multicultural ethos, has long embraced the concept of sister city affiliations as a pathway to global citizenship. These relationships are not just formal agreements but living bridges that link the hearts and minds of our communities to those abroad. Japan, known for its blend of ancient traditions and cutting-edge

innovation, shares over one hundred sister city relationships with Australia and our partnership with Minokamo extends back thirty five years. These partnerships can serve as a conduit for exchanges of culture, education and economic collaborations.

Although Dubbo is yet to form any formal relationship with South Korea, the nation has a storied link with Australia including the three years of the Korean War when Australia stood beside South Korea in defence of democracy against North Korea. South Korea is well known for its dynamic culture and technological advancements.

The value of international relationships cannot be overstated. They allow us to transcend the confines of our local experiences, embracing a world brimming with diversity and possibilities. Our sister city partnerships have opened doors to cultural exchanges that have enriched our community's tapestry with vibrant threads of traditions, languages, and ideas. Our authentic Japanese Tea House and Shoyoen Japanese Gardens are ongoing testaments to the value of our Minokamo link.

Moreover, these relationships remind us that in the face of global challenges, from climate change to economic disparities, our interconnectedness is our strength.

Through collaboration and shared knowledge, we can address these issues more effectively, drawing on diverse perspectives and experiences.

As we continue to nurture and expand our sister city relationships, we are not just building bridges between towns or cities; we are fostering a

global community of shared responsibility and kinship.

As is the case with this trip, I encourage members of our community to engage with and contribute to our sister city activities. That can be with international visits or just making visitors to our city feel welcome.

As we look to the future, let us continue to cherish and deepen our bonds with cities around the world. In doing so, we reaffirm our commitment to a world where understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect are the cornerstones of our shared prosperity.

Councillor Mathew Dickerson
Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

Last Edited: 26 Mar 2024