

**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
(DECYP)
AFTERNOON TEA FOR MEMBERS OF THE TASMANIAN DELEGATION
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2025 AFS YOUTH ASSEMBLY
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2025**

Good afternoon, everyone.

I warmly welcome you all to Government House to recognise and celebrate your participation in the 2025 AFS Youth Assembly and International Affairs Academy. May I thank you for your report you will share with us today, with particular thanks to its lead author, Harry Watson of Hobart College.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

I acknowledge the Department for Education, Children and Young People for supporting the students from both Elizabeth College and Hobart College who represented Tasmania with distinction.

This year's AFS Youth Assembly brought together hundreds of young global citizens from more than 80 countries in New York City in August. You joined a dynamic international community united under the theme *"Defying Adversity: Empowering Young Global Citizens to Lead."*

You participated in an extensive program with discussions on peacebuilding, green skills, mental health, and women's leadership. You engaged with the SDG Zone, a space dedicated to engaging young people in the UN's sustainable development goals, you interacted in the Action & Impact Hub, and you explored opportunities for your future studies and careers.

One of the highlights of this year's program was the International Youth Day Celebration, organised by AFS Intercultural Programs, UNITAR, and the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations.

It is inspiring to know that Tasmania's young leaders were part of that global conversation.

Some delegates took part in specialised Academies before the Youth Assembly commenced; programs focusing on climate entrepreneurship, changemaking, global education, and international affairs. These Academies, delivered by leading institutions such as New York University and the University of Pennsylvania, represent an extraordinary opportunity, and many of you accessed them through prestigious international scholarships.

Your selection for these programs is evidence of your capability, your motivation, and the promise others see in you.

One of the most significant outcomes of this year's Assembly was the co-creation of the *Declaration of Impact*—a collective commitment to driving positive change in your communities and beyond. It stresses partnerships, shared responsibility and the urgency of addressing global challenges.

As Tasmanians, you bring this Declaration home not merely as a document, but as a call to action.

All of us here today are immensely proud of your achievements.

Thank you for the way you have represented our State. Thank you to your teachers, families and supporters who have helped bring you to this point. And thank you again for the report you will share with us today.

I wish each of you every success as you continue your education.

Official Secretary ... *[David to introduce Harry]*