

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 29, 2011

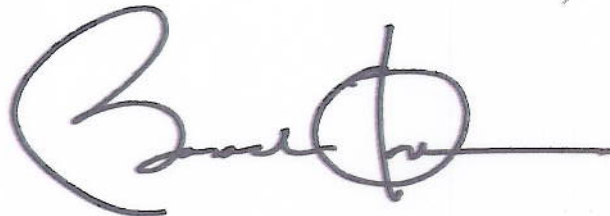
I send warm greetings to the people of Australia as we observe the 69th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea.

In the early days of World War II, the Pacific Ocean was the scene of a string of defeats for the Allies that stretched from the Hawaiian Islands to the shores of Australia. On May 7 and 8, 1942, the engagement in the Coral Sea delivered a seminal victory for Allied forces and inspired all nations struggling to restore peace and security in the Pacific.

The friendship forged in battle during those fateful days in 1942 helped win World War II and gave rise to an enduring alliance formalized through the signing of the ANZUS Treaty in 1951. After nearly 70 years, our dynamic and important alliance is one of the cornerstones of security in the Asia Pacific. Australia and the United States remain united in purpose to preserve the freedom of our peoples.

Today, we attest to the strong bond between our nations and recall the courage and selfless devotion of the American and Australian service members who fought in that battle 69 years ago. For those who perished, we honor their sacrifice and the loss we shared at sea.

As we honor their memory, we reaffirm our commitment to move forward together to shape a world that is secure, prosperous, and free. I wish you all the best.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Barack Obama's signature, written in a cursive style.