

> Siemens CEO appointed to German-Australia advisory board

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Siemens Australia CEO Jeff Connolly (pictured) has been appointed to a new joint advisory group to strengthen diplomatic ties between Germany and Australia.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and German Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed to establish the 15-member group to examine ways to build even closer ties between their two countries during the German leader's visit to Brisbane in November for the G20 summit.

Mr Connolly will join leading political, business and cultural representatives from both countries, including Finance Minister Senator Matthias Cormann, National Australia Bank Chairman Michael Chaney and German Minister of State Professor Maria Böhmer.

The group will work to identify opportunities for increased trade and investment between the two nations, as well as promoting cultural and social links and scientific collaboration.

Mr Connolly said he was honoured to be appointed to such a prestigious body and looked forward to the opportunities it would present for Australia.

"The Fourth Industrial Revolution – also known as Industry 4.0 – originated in Germany and local manufacturing and other industry could learn much from that experience.

"Germany has set the example for investment in Industry 4.0 and is reaping the benefits. My hope is that the formation of this board will accelerate Australian commitment in future technologies and establish our place in the global supply chain," Mr Connolly said.

He said Germany was one of Australia's top 10 merchandise trading partners, with two-way trade of more than \$16 billion (AUD).

"There are nearly 500 German subsidiaries registered in Australia across a variety of industries, with the biggest German companies providing employment for more than 45,000 people.

"Siemens has been in Australia for more than 140 years and the technology it provides is critical to many local industries such as oil and gas, manufacturing, mining, energy and healthcare," Mr Connolly said.

The advisory group will hold its first meeting in Berlin in July before presenting a report to Ms Merkel and Mr Abbott later this year.

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