

The region reacts on aid cuts and the new PM

by Ashlee Betteridge
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Leaders around the Asia-Pacific have congratulated Australia's Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott.

But last week's announcement that the Coalition government would seek to cut aid has ruffled some feathers.

Indonesia is one country where the proposed cuts [have been strongly criticised](#).

"We do rely a lot on Australian aid and it has done a lot of good in terms of improving relations," editor of Tempo, Yuli Smartono, [told](#) Radio Australia.

"As he... slashes aid to Indonesia, the impression that people have is of a government that is only concerned and focused on business and making money, and less on developing people capital."

PNG government sources have [told AAP](#) that they believed the change of government in Australia would only result in 'tinkering around the margins' of existing aid and asylum-seeker processing agreements.

New Zealand Prime Minister John Key [said](#) on Friday that cuts to aid would place more strain on small Pacific countries. The TEAR Fund NGO has [spoken out](#) against the cuts as it believes it will not only place more strain on the Pacific, but that the NZ aid program will be left to fill the shortfall.

Meanwhile, [in an opinion piece for the Guardian](#), ODI researcher Lisa Denney has called for Abbott to consider the impact of aid cuts to "Australia's reputation as a good international citizen that adheres to long-standing commitments, and to good aid practice."

[Church leaders](#) in Australia have also spoken out against the plan.

Read more of our analysis on the new government and aid [here](#).

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Link: <https://devpolicy.org/the-region-reacts-on-aid-cuts-and-the-new-pm/>