



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 132

24 SEPTEMBER 1973

FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS

The Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs said today that the Australian Government had formally and officially informed the Registrar of the International Court of the nuclear tests conducted by France at Mururoa Atoll in July and August and had pointed out that, in the view of the Australian Government, this constituted a breach of the interim measures order made by the Court on 22 June.

Mr Whitlam said that although he still hoped that the French Government would make a formal announcement that its test series had ended, he understood that this was not the intention of the French Government. He was, however, prepared to assume that the lifting of restrictions as from 15 September indicated that the current series of tests had in fact concluded.

The Prime Minister said that he accordingly hoped that this would lead to the lifting of the constraints that had been imposed by Australian trade unions on commercial and economic relations between Australia and France.

Mr Whitlam emphasised that the Australian Government's firm position was one of continuing opposition to the conducting of atmospheric nuclear testing. The Australian Government had all along made this plain to the French Government and would continue to do so.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.