



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement
24 April 1975

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, THE HON.
E.G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P., ON ARRIVAL IN LIMA, PERU

I am delighted to be in Peru and the historic capital of Lima. This is the first visit to Peru by an Australian Prime Minister - indeed to any South American country - but it is not the first by a minister of the Australian Labor Government. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Willesee, visited Peru in 1974 during a tour which took him also to Mexico, Venezuela, Argentina and Brazil. My visit will therefore build, at the highest level, a firm and established friendship between our countries, and develop the diplomatic and economic links which exist between us.

I believe there is scope for both our countries to work together more closely and to seek a deeper understanding of each other's views. Australia and Peru were members of the United Nations Security Council for 1973 and 1974; there are opportunities for further co-operation in the United Nations. We share many interests and attributes in common. We are both medium powers; we are both Pacific powers; we were both once colonies of European powers; we are both rich in resources and dependent for our economic well being on the export and development of those resources. Above all, we both believe there is a role for the medium powers in shaping a world order based on peace and social justice.

I look forward keenly to my stay in this important and respected country and to my talks with President Velasco, Prime Minister Bermudez and other ministers. With my Special Minister of State, Mr Bowen, and my officials, I hope to discuss our bilateral commercial relations, scientific and cultural co-operation, arms control, resources and the law of the sea and to exchange views on world problems in our different regions. Australians admire the efforts of the Peruvian people to develop their nation and preserve its economic independence in the same sturdy spirit with which they asserted their political independence a century and a half ago. I hope my visit will help us both move closer to our common goals of national progress and international co-operation.

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