



## PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 547  
25 August 1975

### NAMIBIA DAY

Acting Foreign Minister, Mr Whitlam, reiterated today Australia's moral and material support to the people of Namibia.

In a statement to mark Namibia Day on 26 August the Acting Minister said that Namibia Day had been designated by the United Nations at the General Assembly session in 1973 as an annual reminder of the illegal jurisdiction of South Africa over the territory.

The Australian Government, he said, was particularly concerned about the deprivation of basic human rights and the extension of the policy of apartheid and the homelands (Bantustans) policy into the territory by South Africa.

The Minister recalled that in 1966 Australia had supported a resolution by the United Nations General Assembly terminating South Africa's mandate, and in 1972, 1973 and 1974 had supported resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council reaffirming the decision of the International Court of Justice that South Africa should withdraw from Namibia.

In May 1974 the Australian Government had protested to South Africa over the mass arrests of members and supporters of the indigenous political organisation, SWAPO (South West African Peoples Organisation), which it regarded as a denial of legitimate political rights.

Australia's concern for the people of Namibia was further demonstrated on 1 January 1975 when it became a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, a body established by the United Nations General Assembly to administer the territory until it achieves independence.

The Australian Government had given material assistance to Namibia by contributing \$10,000 to the United Nations Fund for Namibia in 1974/75 and would be contributing \$25,000 in 1975/76.

Mr Whitlam said that the swiftly changing situation in Africa, due to the independence of former colonial territories, as well as the increasing activity of various national liberation groups, had given new impetus to the struggle by the peoples of southern Africa for self-determination and independence.

The Australian Government called on the Government of South Africa to recognise its international obligations, to relinquish its illegal jurisdiction over Namibia and to facilitate the transition to majority rule and independence.

The longer the problem of Namibia remained unsolved, said Mr Whitlam, the less was the chance that the final solution would be achieved peacefully.

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