



**PRIME MINISTER**

136/95

**STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP**

**THE FOURTH FRENCH NUCLEAR TEST**

I strongly condemn the latest French nuclear test at Mururoa Atoll.

I am appalled that the French Government continues to show disregard for the feelings of the people of the South Pacific. It has further isolated itself from international thinking on nuclear issues and significantly devalued its international credentials.

Australia warmly welcomed the recent United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for an immediate end to nuclear testing. It is clear the international community shares Australia's conviction that continued nuclear testing is not consistent with changed global strategic circumstances and changing world opinion.

The Government fully supports the recent Commonwealth statement on disarmament in which the overwhelming majority of leaders condemned continued nuclear testing and all leaders emphasised the importance of the determined pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons. This confirmed to me the breadth and depth of opposition to continued nuclear testing.

Continued testing raises the level of scepticism amongst non-nuclear weapon states about the sincerity of some nuclear powers to pursue nuclear disarmament and therefore advances the prospect that some non-nuclear weapon nations will pursue their own nuclear weapons programs. The French Government must realise that by sending the wrong signals about its nuclear intentions it is in fact undermining its long term security, not strengthening it. Security in the next century will not be found in the possession of nuclear weapons.

The Government calls on France to abandon immediately its testing program and to desist from actions which undermine progress towards a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I will shortly be making a statement on the next steps Australia will be taking to pursue the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons which I set out in my United Nations Day speech on 24 October 1995.

**CANBERRA  
22 November 1995**